8-10-2021

How White Racial Identity Changes in Time and Context for One Teacher (Educator)

Melissa Schellenberg
Georgia State University

ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, HOW WHITE RACIAL IDENTITY CHANGES IN TIME AND CONTEXT FOR ONE TEACHER (EDUCATOR), by MELISSA SCHELLENBERG, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Doctor of Philosophy, in the College of Education & Human Development, Georgia State University.

The Dissertation Advisory Committee and the student's Department Chairperson, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty.

_____
Diane Truscott, Ph.D.
Committee Chair

_____
Sarah Bridges-Rhoads, Ph.D.
Committee Member

_____
Teri Holbrook, Ph.D.
Committee Member

_____
Michelle Zoss, Ph.D.
Committee Member

_____
Date

_____
Laura May, Ph.D.
Chairperson, Department of Early Childhood and Elementary Education

_____
Paul A. Alberto, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Education & Human Development

AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

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Melissa Claire Nicolatos Schellenberg
Early Childhood and Elementary Education
College of Education & Human Development
Georgia State University

The director of this dissertation is:

Diane Truscott
Department of Early Childhood and Elementary Education
College of Education & Human Development
Georgia State University
Atlanta, GA 30303

CURRICULUM VITAE

Melissa Claire Nicolatos Schellenberg

ADDRESS: 33 Gilmer St., SE
Atlanta, GA 30303

EDUCATION:

Ph.D.	2021	Georgia State University Early Childhood and Elementary Education
Master's Degree	2005	Georgia State University Professional Counseling
Bachelor's Degree	2002	Appalachian State University Special Education

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

01/2020 – 05/2020	Student Intern Supervisor Georgia State University
07/2019 – 12/2019	Part-time Instructor Georgia State University
08/2015 - present	Substitute Teacher Local School District, GA

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS:

Schellenberg, M. (2019). The Art of Decolonization: Self-Reflection through Collage. Presentation for National Association for Multicultural Education (November 6-10). Tucson, Arizona.

Schellenberg, M. (2019). Using Visual Research Methodology to Explore Teacher Perceptions of Teacher-Student Relationships. Presentation for the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry (May 15-18). Champaign-Urbana, Illinois.

Durden, T., **Schellenberg, M.,** & Crandall, L. (2017, August). Military Childcare Liaison Initiative and Child Care and Youth Training and Technical Assistance Capstone Report of Accomplishments. https://child.unl.edu/Evaluation/Capstone%20ReportCYTTAP_MCCL_FINAL.pdf

HOW WHITE RACIAL IDENTITY CHANGES IN TIME AND CONTEXT FOR ONE TEACHER (EDUCATOR)

by

MELISSA SCHELLENBERG

Under the Direction of Diane Truscott

ABSTRACT

For the current study, I engaged in a self-study to understand how my White racial identity influenced my teaching and learning practices in multiple contexts and how my racial identity changed over time. This study was framed in Helms' (2020) White racial identity framework, which consists of a total of six schemas. Each schema details different ways in which White racial identity presents depending on the level of White racial identity being centered. The current research utilized multiple methods to establish trustworthiness. Data generation and analysis occurred simultaneously. I used artifact elicitation, which involves including a stimulus, during four interviews or discussions with a critical friend to encourage increased detail and depth in an interview (Henry & Fetters, 2012). The stimulus for this study included a total of 32 artifacts: 25 text-based artifacts including instructional handouts and assignments, 5 visual artifacts, including collages and sketches, and 2 social media sites. Data sources included the transcripts from the discussion and reflective writing with the texts of Saad (2020) and Helms (2020) as critical friends. Data were analyzed using reflective thematic analysis and constant comparison to ensure in-depth analysis and critical reflection. Findings suggest that racial identity shifts as White teachers move through various contexts. Additionally, this research supports Helms' (2020) assertion that racial identity schemas are fluid and changing and that multiple schemas may operate at the same time. Understanding how my racial identity was represented in these artifacts offers guidance for other White teachers who are engaging in similar work and possible reasons for these moves.

Keywords: White racial identity, Janet Helms, elicitation, critical friends, teacher, education

How White Racial Identity Changes in Time and Context for One Teacher (Educator)

by

Melissa Schellenberg

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the

Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Early Childhood and Elementary Education

in

the College of Education & Human Development

Georgia State University

Atlanta, GA
2021

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my teaching partners over the years,

my peers and colleagues, students, families, and administrators.

Through this work

I realized that

I owe more to you all

than I ever knew.

ACKNOWLDGMENTS

Throughout this disseration process, I have received support and assistance in many forms.

To Sarah Bridges-Rhoads: Thank you for always being my cheerleader, for making time for me even when you didn't have any, for reminding me that wandering is okay, everyone is on their own path, and the importance of keeping humor and humanity.

To Teri Holbrook: Thank you for giving me time and space for this work, for helping me find words, for encouraging me to consider and include all my thinking and for supporting me in finding ways to do that.

To Diane Truscott: Thank you for showing patience when life happened while reminding me that I have deadlines, for listening everytime I said, "so here's what I'm thinking about for my research now. I know it's not what we talked about last time," and helping me narrow those times into an amazing experience.

To Michelle Zoss: Thank you for encouraging play in the academic space, sharing the realities of being a scholar-mother, always having encouraging words for me and my work, and sharing your creative works with me.

To My Critical Friend: Thank you for your insights, direct questions and observations, endless support and investment in this work.

To Janet Helms and Layla Saad: Thank you for offering your guidance and support to White people engaging in work related to racial identity and awareness. Your works have shifted my thinking, way of being, and how I see the world and challenged me to be a better person.

To Ms. Mary and Ms. Kiki: Thank you for sharing the importance and depth that can exist in a single interaction and for caring about everyone you come into contact with. I thought about your ways and being often during this process.

To Lily: Thank you for hanging with me through this process, helping me prioritize my world, going on Culver's dates, and cheering me on. You are the best.

To my family, especially John:

I started this journey,

and you were along for the ride,

whether you wanted to be or not.

During late nights, writing days, and split attention

you supported me,

encouraged me to trust in the process, and confirmed the importance of my work.

This would not have been possible without you.

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1 Introduction

Coffee mugs. They're everywhere.

Stacked in cabinets. Overflowing shelves in thrift stores. So common, they're barely noticeable.

Oh, sure. There's the occasional one that stands out with its slightly square shape or humorous saying. One that conveys thoughts you have in your head about your need for coffee or your coworkers. But those too are generally passing smiles to be replaced by another mug. Another day.

I had the opportunity to make my own mugs. Even these were taken for granted. I had my favorites. One that fit perfectly in the cup holder of my car. One with a lid for days I wanted my coffee to stay hot.

I assumed they would just be there.

The focus of this story is the mug I used for pondering and writing. It was small and brown with textured lines going around it. It fit perfectly in my hand, and it always stayed home. Until one day. . .

I was out walking with my children,
two on scooters and two in a stroller I was pushing. We were
on our way back from the post office when I noticed
something on the side of the road.
I stopped and picked it up.
It was a piece of a ceramic mug.
It was a piece of my ceramic mug.
A piece from the bottom
with shiny brown glaze and soft ridges.
The bottom even had a sliver of my initials,
which had been carved
into the bottom
of my mug.
I tried to get my mind to believe that the piece was from another mug, a different mug,
NOT MY MUG.
But it wouldn't because
it was my mug.
I was stunned.
I looked around for more pieces.
My children asked me what was wrong as my eyes teared up.
My mug.
I looked across the street to the median and saw three more pieces.
When the street was clear, I walked across and picked them up.
They confirmed beyond a doubt that
it was my mug

smashed
to bits
on the road.
I couldn't process it.
I put the pieces in the cup holder of the stroller, and told the girls we would continue our walk home.
I didn't cry, but I was close.
What had happened?
My daughter and niece got home first and tried to explain the situation to my husband, but he did not understand. When I went in and showed him the pieces, I could tell he had the same difficulty processing the situation. We could not figure out how my mug got there. I only used it for writing.
It didn't leave the house. How did it get on the street?

I put the pieces on a shelf in my bedroom and I cried. It seemed like an overreaction to a broken mug, but I couldn't stop it. I just had to let the emotions out. I felt pulled to go back to the road and look for more pieces. To try to put it back together. I don't know why.
It just seemed like something I needed to do.
When my husband saw that I was upset, he offered to go out with a flashlight and find more pieces. I told him I had thought about doing that but it seemed crazy. He assured me it wasn't.
The next day I went out to look. My daughter came with me, and we walked slowly down the street and found a number of pieces. We looked on the side of the road along the sidewalk and along the median. We looked through leaves built up on the side of the road, peered into the storm drains, and realized how camouflaged the cup pieces were. The clay looked like the rocks from the road,
and the glaze matched the fall leaves and brown dirt.
We continued looking anyway.
I thought that it may have been better if I didn't find any pieces because I could stop looking. I could accept that the rest of the pieces had been carried away by rain or wind or something. But we kept finding them.
Eventually we left, but it felt unfinished. How would I know when I was finished?

I tried to be content with the pieces we had found, but I was not. I returned three days later by myself. I was running an errand that led me to drive down the street, so I pulled into the parking lot. This time I gave myself a ten minute time limit to look for pieces. I walked down the sidewalk away from my car and walked back towards my car on the median.
I found more pieces.
I wanted to keep looking, but I stuck to my time limit.

Two days later I went out with my daughter, and we looked again. We found more pieces.
They were smaller than the ones we found previously.
I was surprised at how the pieces seemed to be so visible.

I wondered how I missed them on previous trips.
I wondered how many pieces I was missing
as I looked now.
My daughter found a piece in the grass between the sidewalk and the street, and
I wondered how many pieces I was missing because
I was so focused on the street and not exploring the grass.
I also started picking up other broken pieces on the ground
– clear glass, brown glass, weathered rocks.
I didn't know why.
It just felt right.
Because I was in the process of planning my dissertation, I decided the mug would be a good metaphor. It had pieces. I would put them together as I worked with my research data. The final result would look slightly different than anticipated, but it would tell a story.
But it didn't happen that way.
The pieces of my mug are still sitting there
on the shelf
waiting.
It seems that, while the metaphor fit for my research, the mug is something different. It is my whiteness. Hanging out with the same unassuming presence as the coffee mug. It's everywhere. It's normal. Until I started this work. That's when my whiteness shattered. I didn't know what to think or what to do.
I wanted to fix it, but
what I needed to do was
sit with the unfamiliar,
the discomfort,
the realization that investigating my White racial identity was not a process to complete
but a journey that is still in process,
will always be in process.
Like my mug.

Navigating This Paper

This paper presents a self-study about my White racial identity and my work as a special education teacher and teacher educator. Although I earned a Bachelor's degree in Special Education and taught in the field for over 15 years, it was only recently that I realized the troubled relationship between these identities. I had heard for years about issues related to racial disproportionality in the special education system. The overrepresentation of Black and Brown children, particularly males,

in special education was the focus of numerous trainings and discussions when I was teaching. We considered testing, diagnosing, and implementing new teaching strategies, without "exploring the beliefs, assumptions, worldviews, ways of knowing, and cultural inclinations of those writing the special education scripts" (Patton, 1998, p. 26) or of ourselves as teachers. Disproportionality was not connected to the larger context of White privilege and racism in America (Blanchett, 2006) or to my role as a White teacher. Instead, issues of disproportionality were framed as the consequence of student choices, inabilities, and pathologies, an ideation that has remained in the special education system for decades (Patton, 1998). I did not recognize these issues prior to engaging in the work of considering my White racial identity.

When I started on this work, I did not know where investigating my racial identity would take me, but I knew it was a journey on which I had to embark. Due to the personal nature of this study, the process was messy and complicated. In reflecting on my work as a teacher, a career of which I am very proud, I saw my thoughts and actions through a different lens. The way I understood my choices, situations, and interactions shifted, leading to lots of questioning and concern about the impact of my actions on others. I struggled with the way I saw both my past and present selves in regards to my White racial identity. I questioned and critiqued my interactions with people from my past and in the present. I have done my best to reflect this struggle in my paper.

While there are sections, such as the Literature Review, which conform to a more traditional genre of academic writing, other sections, such as the Findings and Discussion sections, share a more personal voice. I include poetry and prose, such as the piece above, to provide insight into my thinking and processing during my study. In addition, I share numerous visuals, including collages, to explain and provide examples of how I engaged with this work. I created multiple collages during my analysis to help me think through complex ideas and struggles. While these collages were not made to be viewed by others, I included a couple that were integral to my process and thinking.

I created the collages with found images, cutting and tearing words and images from a variety of magazines. It is notable that these images were originally created with a purpose. The composition and framing designed and implemented to convey a message to readers and consumers. While I removed these images from their original setting, they maintain their original intent and connotations, which may be problematic. I discuss specifics in regards to how images shown in Figures 18, 19, and 20 are problematic in the Findings chapter.

And now for something completely different[1]: Inside the Research

As I worked through my research process, I engaged in a couple of ways that did not really fit into the official write up. I pondered pottery, created collage, and puzzled. While these aspects of the process were important to me, I could not find a clear way to incorporate them into my formal writing. As a result, I decided to include them under the title "And now for something completely different", which was the name of a British sketch comedy film in 1971. The film included comedy sketches and animations, and the phrase was used as a transition within the show. I chose this title because, at times during this process, I felt like I was in a sketch comedy. My thinking and discomfort in learning about myself and my Whiteness took place as I engaged directly in my dissertation work but also as I facilitated virtual school for my children during a pandemic, watched news stories about violence towards Black and Brown people and resulting protests, planted a vegetable garden, engaged in difficult conversations with my friends and family about my work, and so many other activities. I have used the same beginning phrase, followed by a colon and a descriptor. The related text and images are in a box. This research makes sense without these sections. However, in the interest of being transparent about my entire process and opening the curtain on what happens outside of the formal process described in this paper, I decided to include these pieces.

[1] While this title is used in relation to the 1971 film, the original credit for this phrase is given to Christopher Trace who was an original presenter on a children's television show called Blue Peter.

Considering White Identity and Teaching

"critical reflection on our conditioning by our cultural context,
on our way of acting, and on our values is indispensable"
(Freire, 2005, p. 142).

Research indicates that children show awareness of ethnic differences around 2-3 years old and show racial bias as early as 4 years old (Loyd & Gaither, 2018). Castelli, Carraro, Tomelleri, and Amari (2007) found that White children as young as 4 indicated a preference for playing with White children and a belief that their parents would want them to choose a White playmate and have White adult friends. Thandeka (1999) supports these indications as she shares memories of White people related to when they first noticed they were white. She discusses children, four and five years old, hearing their parents comment negatively about interracial couples and expressing discomfort at the presence of Black and Brown children at a White child's birthday party. Thandeka stresses that these experiences impact the way White people see and understand racial differences from an early age.

Though this research demonstrates that children see race from an early age, Thompson (1998) discusses that White children are sentimentalized as not seeing race. As a result, White children may be perceived as enacting a narrative of "racial-innocence". The assumption that White children do not see race supports the White belief that not noticing racial differences is natural and conveys the privilege of ignorance regarding systemic racism and the roles White people play in it. The research suggests that this assumption is false. Taken together, this information indicates that White children are engaging with and learning about different skin colors and race from their environments, but White parents and teachers are not addressing the presence of racial differences directly. Instead, they explicitly promote the idea that children do not notice race while simultaneously implicitly indicating that race does matter through coded words and actions.

Implicit messages about race appear in the school context in a number of ways. Issues of race are discussed in terms of addressing achievement gaps and the need for zero tolerance policies to ensure the safety of all, situating people of color as deficient and defiant (Skiba & Peterson, 1999). The focus is placed on working hard and being virtuous to be successful (DiAngelo, 2018) instead of acknowledging the impact of societal and institutional racism. White teachers may not work to understand the authentic experiences of students of color and other marginalized groups, preferring to outsource them to another teacher or classroom. Following this system places value on students who assimilate to the educational expectations while punishing those who do not (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2008). In the greater scheme of education, Matias (2013) states that the White teaching pipeline continues to normalize Whiteness by training teachers to teach and reinforce White ideals while failing to prepare them to teach diverse groups of students. People of color who enter this pipeline experience the devaluation of their ideas and perspectives and even hostility, which further maintains the White power structure. As a consequence of this teaching, White students grow up to renew the cycle of inequality and racism.

It was not until I engaged in my doctoral program that I realized how White and insulated my life was. I had taught in diverse settings and had Black and Brown family members and friends. Because I did not engage in conversations about race, I thought everything was good. We were just people accepting each other, and race was not an issue.

As I worked through my doctoral program, I saw my life through a new lens of Whiteness and systemic racism. I thought about the neighborhoods I grew up in, the schools I attended, and the lack of diversity I experienced in those spaces. I learned from my colleagues and professors that the lack of discussion around race I had experienced was not a sign of universal acceptance, but an indication of a problem, of a lack of awareness, of racism. I thought about how I impacted students and peers positively and negatively through my actions and how assignments I created challenged

or supported racism. I thought about specific situations and conversations, as well as my larger way of being as an educator. I thought about this as I read articles by Black and Brown scholars, teachers, and parents. There was a common theme of being frustrated with the constant battle to be recognized and respected and the need for White people to stand up and work to be antiracist (Baldwin, 1963; Faison Sr., 2020; Reagan Griffin, Jr., 2020; Yancy, 2015). Considering the racial identities of the White teacher is a critical step given that the majority of teachers in the United States are middle-class White women (Goldstein, 2014).

Helms' White Racial Identity Framework

Working to meet the needs of diverse populations is not the same as engaging in antiracist work (Kendi, 2019). Engaging in antiracist work requires White people to step back and consider alternative perspectives. Some Black and Brown scholars, such as Saad (2018) and Helms (2020), offer guidance to facilitate this work. Including the voices of Black and Brown people is imperative when interrogating Whiteness because Black and Brown people can provide a view with which White people are unfamiliar. Yancy (2012) explains that

> for White people, Whiteness is a transcendental norm in terms of which they live their lives as persons, individuals. People of color, however, confront Whiteness in their everyday lives, not as an abstract concept but in the form of embodied Whites who engage in racist practices that negatively affect their lives. (p. 7)

As a result, Black and Brown people can offer insight into racism and the role of White people.

Helms (2020) provides a White racial identity framework to support White people in considering their position in the racial system. Helms' most recent version of her framework is presented in a book that provides writing and thinking prompts to help White people understand their White racial identity and how to develop in relation to White racial identity. Helms has refined her White racial identity framework since her first proposed model in 1984, shifting from a stage-based

model to a more fluid framework. These shifts addressed some critiques of Helms' model. For example, Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson (1994) noted that Helms' model was based too closely on existing racial identity models, which focused on the racial identity development of Black and Brown people. As a result of the racial power structure in our society, people with different colors of skin have different experiences. These experiences impact racial identity formation differently. Helms' (2020) current framework directly discusses the racial power hierarchy and the impacts this has on White racial identity development. In centering the experiences of White people in terms of the privileges they experience, Helms differentiated her model from the models based on the Black and Brown racial identity models.

Another critique of Helms' initial model was based on the developmental stages presented (Leach, Behrens, & LaFleur, 2002). Helms provided more detail on the stages, which she renamed statuses. She clarified that statuses evolve over time and are always developing. Helms' (2020) most recent model of White identity development currently includes two phases, each made up of three schemas. While this model may appear as a linear process, Helms presents the schemas as existing in White people all the time with different schemas presenting more prominently in different situations. With this model, Helms shows a clear shift away from the developmental stages model.

Researchers have also critiqued Helms' framework with regards to the focus on how White people feel about themselves (Rowe, Bennet, Atkinson, 1994; Leach, Behrens, & LaFleur, 2002). As initially conceptualized, Helms' model focused on how White people considered and engaged with Black and Brown people instead of how White people felt about themselves. Helms (2020) shares that White people have difficulty defining themselves as White. Instead, White people tend to define themselves in terms of what they are not or in comparison to other groups. In the current model, Helms provides an exercise specifically designed to help White people consider how they feel about their Whiteness. It is notable that in her most recent book Helms addresses some of these

critiques in chapters prior to her explanation of her model of White identity development. Considering the meaning of race, the uses and impacts of colorblind mentality, and what it means to be White are all presented in the initial chapters of her book. These topics provide the reader with additional framing for Helms' model of White racial identity development.

For the White teacher who is considering her Whiteness, Helms' framework can be helpful in understanding how a teacher is experiencing and expressing her White racial identity. Helms' (2020) framework consists of two phases, internalization of racism and evolution of a nonracist White identity. Each phase includes three schemas, which detail different ways White racial identity presents depending on the level of White racial identity being centered. In the next section, each of the phases and schemas are described in order to show the differences between the schemas and to detail how they may appear in a teaching context.

Phase 1: Internalization of Racism

The first phase, the internalization of racism, involves learning and internalizing rules of racism and creating self-protective strategies that allow the White teacher to maintain the benefits of racism. The ways in which one internalizes racism involves both self and social context and is described by Helm as existing within three schemas: contact, disintegration, and reintegration.

Contact

The schema of Contact involves a state of ignorance or neutrality in regards to racial issues and the use of colorblindness or denial as self-protection for teachers. Tatum (1994) discusses how White teachers see themselves as the norm without consciously considering the advantages given to them do to their skin color or their assumptions about other groups. Haviland (2008) discusses the tendency of White teachers centering this schema to "gloss over" issues of racism and White supremacy. The research found that avoiding words, asserting ignorance, citing authority, such as

well-known academics or writers, and changing the topic are ways that White teachers avoided discussions of race and related topics. Pollock (2004a) builds on the phenomenon of teachers' not seeing color by considering teacher behaviors and what she termed colormuteness. Pollock examined the use of language by teachers in various settings within the school and found that teachers often avoided talking about issues in racial terms or spoke about them but only quietly, among a small group of friends or peers. Colormuteness, then is "the shared, adult-dominated practice of deleting race labels from talk," as opposed to being truly colorblind (Pollock, 2004b, p. 35). One example from Pollock's (2004a) research of colormuteness is how teachers respond to the issue of skipping class. While the teachers noticed and discussed in small groups that the majority of the students in the hallways during classes were Black, the teachers indicated that they would not address this issue because they did not want to be accused of discriminating against the students because they were Black. This research illustrates that teachers may make conscious choices about whether or not to address educational issues involving race and that this choice is a privilege they have as White teachers.

The decision to engage with race or not may be due to uncertainty about how to start. Boyd (2020) shares that this is true of many of the White students he engages who are centering the Contact schema. These students are open to learning about and exploring racial systems and experiences but are unsure of how to start. He shares an example from a class where he split his students into groups based on racial/ethnic self-identification and gave them 30 minutes to discuss what they celebrated about their identity and culture. Of the three groups, "people of African descent, Latinx/Hispanics, and Whites," only the first two had points to share at the end of the time. The group who self-identified as White were unsure of how to start the conversation and were unable to identify positive aspects of Whiteness to share. Boyd's example provides insight into how a White person shift into Disintegration, another schema in this phase.

Disintegration

Disintegration, another schema in this phase, is characterized by confusion because denial of race is no longer working and the teacher must acknowledge that she is White and gains certain benefits from this racial identification (Helms, 2020). McIntosh (1988) discusses these benefits as an invisible backpack full of unearned privileges, such as seeing White people represented on TV, in toys, and in leadership positions and being able to shop without being monitored based on skin color. These benefits are normalized from a young age and in such a way that they are elusive to White people as they begin considering race. McIntosh stresses the importance of being able to "distinguish between earned strength and unearned power conferred systematically" (p. 2). Hill (2017) discusses the privilege of being able to walk away from thinking about race and racism because it is not central to our daily lives due to the normalization of Whiteness. As the White teacher becomes aware of systemic racism and the ways she benefits, she may work to find ways she can interrupt the cycle of racism (Tatum, 1994).

However, this recognition leads to a dilemma as the White teacher may find herself isolated because she does not have network of likeminded allies who can help support her as she thinks about her White identity (Tatum, 1994). White teachers may also have a difficult time thinking of themselves positively in regards to their Whiteness while recognizing their location and roles they play in the larger system of racism (Utt & Tochluk, 2020). Part of this is due to a lack of knowledge about White role models. Tatum (1994) shares major models of Whiteness including the active White supremacist, the colorblind White person who does not acknowledge race, and the guilty White person who experiences shame and embarrassment due to their increased awareness of racism. In education, the White savior model is discussed frequently (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2008; Hagerman, 2019; Le & Matias, 2019) as teachers enter the field to help students in situations they perceive as struggling or marginalized (Matias & Mackey, 2015). Less common in discussions of

White models is the White ally (Tatum, 1994; Seidl & Hancock, 2011) or racial justice advocate (Matias & Mackey, 2015) who works to protest racism and actively support changes for equality. As a result of this confusion, the White teacher may blame people of color for their circumstances (Helms, 2020). DiAngelo (2018) states that the systems that confer White privilege create a situation where White people expect the comfort of these privileges while becoming less able to handle the stresses of interrogating them. As a result, another schema, Reintegration, may surface.

Reintegration

The Reintegration schema involves the White teacher being consciously White and believing that White people are a superior group (Helms, 2020). Blaming the victims of racism for their plight and exaggerating differences between racial groups is common in this schema. Tatum (1994) supports Helms' assertions and indicates that these moves allow White people to relieve themselves of guilt and responsibility to work for change. Helms (2020) states that, due to the existing power structure, White people can live with this schema at the forefront forever. She indicates that it takes a "moral re-awakening" to move from this schema to the second phase, which is evolution of a non-racist White identity.

Phase 2: Non-Racist Identity

The second phase, evolution of a non-racist White identity, involves moving past the natural tendency of White people maintain their privileged status by remaining oblivious or neutral towards issues of race. During this shift, White teachers may challenge White racial socialization norms in their classrooms and schools. This phase also includes three schemas: pseudo-independence, immersion-emersion, and autonomy.

Pseudo-Independence

As the White teacher gains a better understanding of the complexity of institutional racism, she will begin to center the schema Helms (2020) calls Pseudo-Independence. This schema involves

the White teacher working towards a positive but realistic view of Whiteness (Helms, 2020) and a decrease in blaming the victims of racism (Tatum, 1994). A person centering this schema intellectualizes the need to help people of color and takes steps to work for equality. Hill (2017) discusses actions such as hiring people of color to diversify staff. He is quick to point out that, while this is a step that can benefit a person of color, if the organization has not done the work of interrogating their space and practices for areas that center White supremacy, new hires may be uncomfortable or be put into positions of representing all people of color in discussions and initiatives. These situations arise due to a lack of understanding that White people are responsible for maintaining systemic racism (Helms, 2020) and that there is no quick fix or checklist to disrupt the system. While Helms (2020) indicates that a White person centering Pseudo-independence may be praised by people from all groups regarding their work to support people of color, this schema still focuses on assimilation instead of acceptance. Utt and Tuchlok (2020) indicate that White people in this schema find it difficult to recognize the simultaneous existence of White and anti-racist identities. This insight may be one reason the White teacher may have difficulty shifting to the more active schema of Immersion-Emersion.

Immersion-Emersion

Immersion-Emersion, another schema of this phase, is characterized by actively exploring racism, assimilation, and White culture as a means of accepting personal responsibility for racism (Helms, 2020). In centering this schema, the White teacher becomes aware of the benefits and deficits of being White and seeks opportunities to engage with other White people in order to understand Whiteness and define a positive White identity (Tatum, 1994). Case (2012) shares analysis of a discussion group formed by White women who were working to develop their anti-racist identities, engage in activism, and challenge racism in their daily lives. Participation in a reading or dis-

cussion group with similar self-reflective goals to White Women Against Racism may aid in maintaining a commitment to the ongoing process of unlearning racism. White teachers who are centering the Immersion-Emersion schema engage in self-reflective practices with other White people as a means of considering Whiteness in relation to pedagogy and social justice (Utt & Tochluk, 2020). The researchers indicate this is important because "there are times when a White anti-racist teacher is one of only a few White people consciously invested in racial justice" (p. 142). In the absence of social support, White anti-racists may become overwhelmed with feelings of isolation that may result in abandoning their striving for social justice. As a result, it is important for anti-racist teachers to find or create groups of likeminded individuals to support their work and provide opportunities for reflecting and connecting.

Autonomy

Autonomy is a schema that involves developing a humanitarian attitude toward people of all races and working for antiracism, as well as fighting against other forms of oppression.[2] Helms (2020) states that this schema is never fully achieved because, as racism changes to maintain its power, individuals must continually question and challenge beliefs, attitudes, and actions. Case (2012) shares the understanding that self-examination and the process of working to become anti-racist is lifelong. As a result, centering this schema can be challenging for the White teacher. Utt and Tockluk (2020) suggest that White teachers who work to maintain a positive, anti-racist White identity are more likely to implement more effective and culturally responsive teaching practices[3]. Helms' model of White racial identity development has been used as a part of this work.

[2] Helms' use of the word autonomy should not be confused with use of the term autonomy in regards to teacher satisfaction and motivation. See Pearson & Moomaw, 2005; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014.

[3] For descriptions of culturally responsive practices, see Alim & Paris, 2017; Gay, 2018; Irvine, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Paris & Alim, 2014

This model has been applied when schools incorporate opportunities for teachers to directly address their Whiteness. Shulman (2016) shares how she and some of the other White teachers at her school started a weekly hour-long discussion group to consider racial identities, privileges, and biases. As she participated in this group, Shulman noted that she experienced shifts in her teaching including increased empathy for Black and Brown students and deeper understandings of institutional racism. These shifts in thinking led to changes in her teaching. For example, Shulman noted how she supplemented required "White text" with readings that provided different views on the topic. She also engaged her students in discussions related to different types of racism as well as their racial identities. Over the course of the school year, the group of teachers experienced a rift, with some teachers wanting to continue focusing on personal work and reflection around racism and others wanting to take action to address racism in the school. As a result, the original group split into two groups with one continuing the original meeting schedule and style and the other creating initiatives at the school intended to address racism in the school, including a mentorship program. Eventually both groups stopped meeting due to lack of time on the part of teachers and lack of interest on the part of students. In reflecting back on this experience, Shulman uses Helms' stages of White racial identity to describe where teachers in both groups "got stuck" during antiracist efforts at her school (p. 76). While the groups took different paths, Shulman determined that the feelings of discomfort and conflict along with the desire to take action experienced by most teachers was indicative of Helms' Disintegration schema. Shulman notes that "Helms' work is crucial here, as it gives us language to acknowledge the discomfort one feels when starting the process of White racial identity work, and to navigate these uncomfortable feelings instead of attempting to ignore them" (p. 76).

Delano-Oriaran and Meidl (2012) conducted an exploratory study to examine how teachers understand their racial identities and to determine the impact of professional development in impacting teaching in racially diverse classrooms. Participants in this study engaged in weekly book discussions around Gary Howard's (2006) *We Can't Teach What We Don't Know: White Teachers, Multiracial Schools*. The group's facilitator took notes throughout the discussions for analysis. Additional data included narrative reflections from the facilitator of the group and an open-ended evaluation completed by the participants at the conclusion of the book group. The researcher coded the data and identified patterns, as well as contradictions. He found that participants expressed a desire for action, both personally and professionally. Specifically, participants discussed the need to develop relationships with people of color and to request continual training regarding cultural awareness from their schools. At the same time, many of the participants seemed unsure of how to take action around their new understandings. This willingness and desire to take action combined with uncertainty about how to take action is indicative of Helms' Disintegration schema. Delano-Oriaran and Meidl (2012) acknowledged the helpfulness of the language Helms provides in navigating feelings instead of ignoring them.

In both cases presented above, the researchers found that teachers seemed to continually center the Disintegration schema due to conflicted feelings about being White and related emotional discomfort. Additionally, Shulman (2016) and Delano-Oriaran and Meidl (2012) see the language of Helms' White racial identity framework as helpful in understanding and discussing race in the teaching context.

Helms' model has also been applied during the investigation of teacher actions (Arsenault, 2018) and beliefs (Bloom, Peters, Margolin, & Fragnoli, 2015). Arsenault (2018) considered White teacher racial identity development and microaggressions in the classroom. Data included interviews with five teachers and surveys completed by students in the classes. After coding the data and

determining themes, Arsenault situated the themes within Helms' White racial identity framework and found that teachers fell in all six of the schemas. For example, one participant in this study stated that focusing on race is part of the problem. In advocating for a shift away from attending to race, this participant showed characteristics of Helms' Contact schema. At the same time, all five participants showed a desire be a non-racist and to build relationships with Black and Brown people. These ideations are representative of Helms' Pseudo-independence schema. From this portion of the findings, it was evident that one of the participants was exhibiting characteristics of two different schemas. This is not surprising because Helms (2020) states that multiple schemas may be used concurrently.

While these studies focus on the racial identities of individuals, the impact of systems of racism cannot be ignored. Carter and Helms (2009) note that "race is socially constructed and, therefore, is defined by rules, customs, and expectations. As a consequence, people often are forced to conform to their assigned racial roles or be subject to racial harassment and discrimination for violating rules that govern race relations" (p. 115). These rules, customs, and expectations support systems of racism and impact how White teachers enact their roles in the classroom. Enforcing inequitable policies, such as zero tolerance policies and dress codes (Edwards, 2020; Skiba & Peterson, 1999), and moving children into programs, such as special education, based on subjective teacher reports, encourage the continuation of the status quo (Connor, Cavendish, Gonzalez, & Jean-Pierre, 2019; Ferri & Connor, 2005). While some of these policies and programs were created with the intent of supporting Black and Brown students (Bleakley & Bleakley, 2017; Drake, 2019), racial injustice persists, suggesting that additional factors must be considered.

One of these factors is the complexity of White racial identity and the various ways it may present. While racist systems and larger institutional contexts impact racial identity (Thrower,

Helms, & Manosalvas, 2020), it is imperative that White teachers investigate their White racial identities and how they present in the classroom.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this self-study is to understand how White teacher identity influences teaching and learning practices in multiple contexts and how racial identity changes over time. Exploring the ways White racial identity develops over time and in different contexts is important because the majority of teachers continue to be White women whose racial identities impact the students they teach. This impact can serve to support or disrupt the cycle of normalized racism.

The current study presents a self-study in which I considered my racial identity, as presented in Helms' White Racial Identity Framework, as a White teacher moving through different contexts over a period of 15 years. Through the adoption of multiple techniques including the use of critical friends, elicitation, reflective writing, and reflective thematic analysis, I considered artifacts and assignments I created as a middle school teacher in two different settings and as a teacher researcher during my doctoral program at the university. I considered these data in conjunction with the schemas of White racial identity development created by Helms to investigate how my White racial identity changed over time and in different contexts. Specifically, my study addressed the following question: How does one teacher's White identity shift over time and contexts?

2 Literature Review

Because of the importance of learning from Black and Brown scholars and other researchers in the field, this study is guided by literature on racial identity formation and a deep examination of racial-ethnic socialization (RES). The literature review discusses how RES occurs in two formative ways for young children, between parents and children and in schools. Consideration of curriculum, how White teachers engage with race in the classroom, and possible reasons for these moves follows. This is followed by a review of the criteria for self-study and an explanation of data sources and methods for analysis used in self-study research.

White Racial Identity

Helms (1993) asserts that White racial identity development is largely influenced by personal interactions, racial environments and the behaviors recognized in other people. These factors influence racial perceptions from the beginning. "White people are born the benefactors and beneficiaries of racism although they may not be consciously aware of their bequest" (Helms, 1993, p. 241). However, the impacts of racism are conveyed both directly and indirectly to White children starting at a very young age.

In their research, Castelli, Carraro, Tomelleri, and Amari (2007) interviewed fifty-eight White children between the ages of four and seven. The children lived in southern Italy and had limited interactions with Black and Brown people. The researchers showed children drawings of a White child and a Black child. They asked the children to choose a playmate and then had the children attribute traits such as nice, happy, ugly, and bad to the different images. Then the children were asked if their parents would be happy if they played with each child in the pictures. Finally, the children were shown an image of a White female adult and an image of a Black female adult and asked who their mother would prefer to meet and how their mother would attribute the traits shared above to the different images. The researchers found that, even at 4 years old, White children

expressed a preference for playing with White children and a belief that their parents would want them to choose a White playmate. In addition, positive traits were more commonly associated with the images of White people while negative traits were more commonly associated with the images of Black people. This study indicates that children see and learn about race from a young age. Thandeka (1999) supports these indications in her research related to when and how White people realized they were White. In her research, Thandeka spoke with White adults about their memories related to race and considered how these memories impacted their understanding of racial differences. Thandeka shares the lifelong impact of these early experiences and how these experiences create conflict within White people from a young age. The conflict arises from the natural recognition that people have different skin colors and the implication from people around them that there is a hierarchy related to these differences.

Though Thandeka demonstrates that children do see race from an early age, Thompson (1998) considers the perception that White children do not see race. This perception may lead White children to enact a narrative of "racial-innocence" in which the child does not discuss race or topics related to race. While this assumption communicates a privilege of innocence in regards to systemic racism, it also increases the internal conflict children experience. Research shows that, while children notice and learn about different races from an early age, there is a lack of acknowledgement and direct conversation from the White adults in their homes and schools. As a result, many White children learn through implicit messages received as a part of the racial-ethnic socialization process (RES).

Coard and Sellers (2005) define racial socialization as "the process by which messages are transmitted/communicated inter- and intra- generationally regarding the significance and meaning of race and ethnicity" (p. 266). Aspects such as teaching values and norms related to race and ethnicity and enabling children to engage in race relations without losing their core sense of self are

included in this definition. Hughes et al. (2006) consider terminology related to RES in their review of related research.

According to the research reviewed by Hughes et al. (2006), "*racial socialization* and *ethnic socialization* are each used broadly to refer to the transmission from adults to children of information regarding race and ethnicity" (p. 748, italics in original). Hughes et al. (2006) state that these terms have been applied to different groups. Racial socialization was a term used to discuss scholars' efforts to understand how African American parents prepare their children to understand barriers and racial stratification in America. This term continues to be used mainly is studies of African Americans. Ethnic socialization on the other hand focused on the experiences of children from immigrant families, mainly Latinx and Asian. Research centered around how children were taught to navigate maintaining their cultural heritage while engaging with pressure to assimilate. The use of this term has expanded to research about multiple cultural and racial groups. Hughes et al. (2006) state that these terms are applicable to all ethnic and racial groups because all parents teach their kids about issues of race and culture. For my paper, I used the term racial-ethnic socialization (RES) because combining racial and ethnic aspects provides a more complete picture of me as a White teacher.

As the White teacher considers her White racial identity, RES is a critical consideration, as it serves as the foundation for racial identity development. The following section provides a brief discussion related to how White parents engage in RES with their children. This section is not intended as a comprehensive overview of this topic. However, its inclusion is important, as parents are one of the first influences on the White teacher's racial identity and how the White teacher engages in her earliest teaching experiences. An in-depth discussion of RES in schools, including the impact of curriculum and potential impact of White teachers, follows.

RES and Parents

RES research traditionally focused on (African American, Latinx, Asian, and Indigenous populations) due to the normalization of Whiteness in America. Hughes et al. (2006) conducted an integrative research review of studies related to RES in Black and Brown families. Hughes et al. (2006) looked at peer-reviewed journals and book chapters related to search terms such as "racial socialization" and "parenting and ethnic identity" (p. 748) and checked the citation lists of these articles for additional sources. Their search yielded over 50 articles, which they considered in their review. The researchers closely considered four themes that emerged from the existing research. The first theme was cultural socialization, which referred to parental practices aimed at teaching racial or ethnic heritage and promoting cultural pride. The second theme, preparation for bias, included parents' efforts to prepare their children to deal with discrimination. Promotion of mistrust in which parents emphasize being wary of interracial interactions was the third theme. In the fourth theme, egalitarianism, parents focus on teaching skills to help their children fit into the mainstream or avoid talking about race. Considering how parents engage in RES with their children can provide insight into the messages children are receiving about race outside of school. Hughes et al. (2006) share that most of these messages are conveyed in direct discussions.

Loyd and Gaither (2018) conducted a review of findings from research on RES specifically related to White youth from early childhood through adulthood using a social-cognitive developmental perspective. The researchers asserted that RES would look different for White families than it did for Black and Brown families. They found that RES in White families was less likely to involve direct discussions about race and ethnicity. Instead, White children's beliefs and attitudes regarding racial and ethnic differences was formed through indirect messaging, such as parents' actions.

Anderson and Jones (2020) support the assertion that racial socialization is occurring whether direct discussions about race are happening or not because White parents are teaching their children about race through indirect conversations and actions. Castelli, De Dea, and Nesdale (2008) investigated the impacts of explicit/verbal cues as compared to implicit/nonverbal cues. In their study, White children were shown videos of interracial interactions where a White person expressed friendly or neutral verbal behaviors towards a Black person. The White person's nonverbal behaviors showed either easiness (eye contact, close proximity) or uneasiness (avoiding eye contact, maintaining distance). The researchers found that children shaped their attitudes towards Black adults based on the implicit, nonverbal behaviors instead of the explicit, verbal behaviors. This study supports the idea that children learn about race from the behaviors of adults including parents and teachers.

In another example, Hagerman (2014) conducted an ethnographic study of White racial socialization over the course of a year and a half. Hagerman conducted interviews, systematic observations, and conducted content analysis of sources including newspapers and websites. She worked with families living in different communities within the same metro area. Both communities shared similar property values and a racial make-up that was approximately 99% White. While the schools in one community were racially integrated, the schools in the other community were predominantly White. During her time in the different communities, Hagerman discovered differences in the parents' discussions and resulting ideas shared by the children. For example, in the community with the predominantly White school, Hagerman found that the parents focused on "safety" and did not directly discuss race or racism with their kids because it did not come up. If they did discuss race, the parents shared colorblind ideology, such as stating that color does not matter and all people are equal. The parents stated that racism was no longer a problem in America and that people need to

work hard to achieve. The ideas promoted through the discussions in this community directly support racist ideas through the minimization of the experiences of Black and Brown people and blaming the victim. Conversely, in the community with racially integrated schools, the White parents openly discussed race, pointed out inequities, and stated that racism is still prevalent in America. The parents in this community also discussed their own privilege and desire to work for change. In this community, with the integrated schools, the parents engaged in RES that opens discussion around the systems of racism present in their community. The families in both of these communities were engaging in RES with their children but with very different messages. In talking with the children in each of these communities, Hagerman found that the children perceived and discussed race in similar ways as their parents. The children in the community with the predominantly White schools commented that racism is not a problem in the school or in America and did not seem to recognize the privileges afforded by the color of their skin. The children in the community with the racially integrated school indicated that racism is a problem, shared experiences with racism at their school, and recognized that being White gave them an advantage in society. The impacts of these varied approaches are important as children move into the social world of schools.

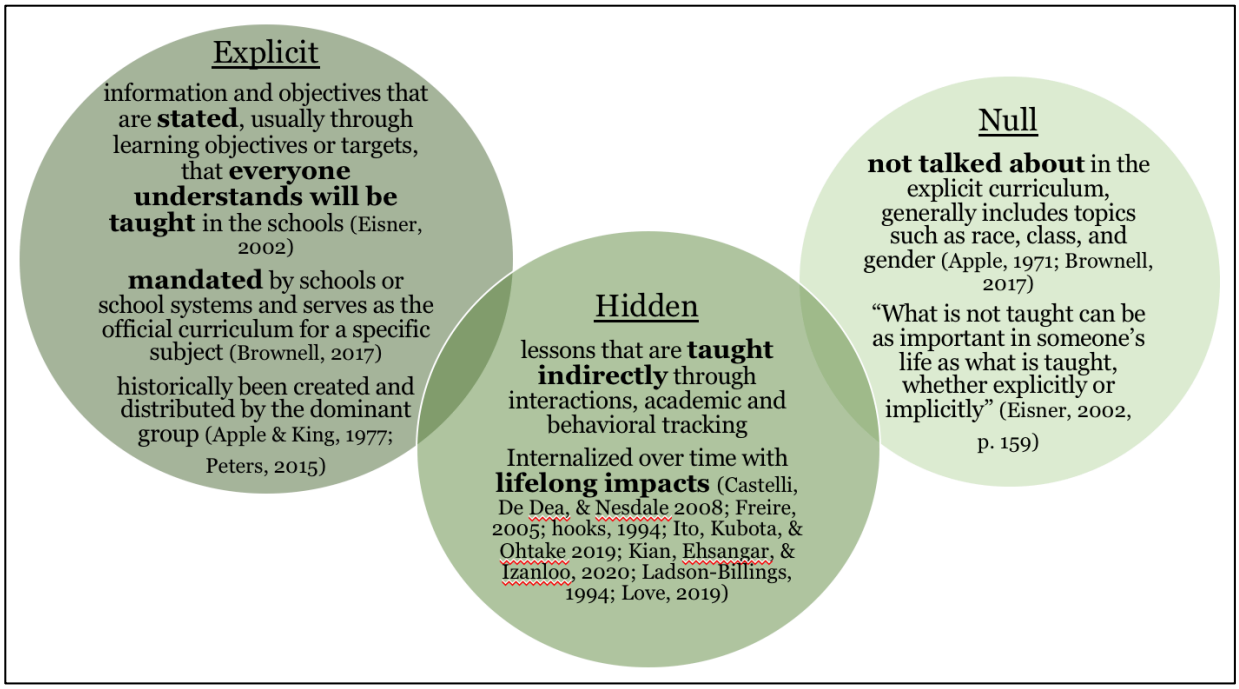
RES and Education

Educational settings have a substantial impact on children's racial identity formation. As Cornbleth (1984) states, "Schools are neither the all-powerful instruments of cultural and economic reproduction that some have claimed them to be nor the prime sources of emancipation as others have promised. Yet, while schools are neither, they provide opportunities for both" (p. 31). These opportunities are important to understand given that Loyd and Gaither (2018) found that, in some situations, White parents rely on schools to teach their kids about race and provide opportunities for racially diverse friendships. While schools are social settings in which children could encounter and learn about race, the educational system is centered around the perspective of Whiteness. The

Whiteness perspective can be seen in the curriculum presented to students, explicit instruction by teachers, and the conveyance of implicit messages through words and actions of teachers.

Figure 1

Three types of curriculum



The Whiteness perspective is centered in the explicit curriculum that is presented to students. The explicit curriculum includes information and objectives that are stated, usually through learning objectives or targets, and that everyone understands are taught in the schools (Eisner, 2002). Frequently the explicit curriculum is mandated by schools or school systems and serves as the official curriculum for a specific subject (Brownell, 2017). Lessons are planned and assignments graded based on this explicit curriculum. The explicit curriculum has come under scrutiny due to its misrepresentation of history and tendency to 'other' Black and Brown people (Peters, 2015). These moves have been made because the explicit curriculum has historically been created and distributed by the dominant group, which is White in America (Apple & King, 1977). Matias

(2013) states "White supremacy manifests itself in education such that all curriculum and pedagogies are about White culture and pejorative White perspectives of people of color" (p. 72). Apple and King (1977) point out that these decisions lead to the shaping of identities for all people. They also stress that there are additional aspects of curriculum to consider, specifically a form called the hidden curriculum.

The hidden curriculum is not a part of the official curriculum. It includes lessons that are taught indirectly (Brownell, 2017). Examples include how teachers interact with students, how students are allowed to move throughout the school, and how students are tracked academically and behaviorally. While these lessons are not taught directly, children internalize them over time as they move through their schooling experience and the impacts of these lessons can last a long time (Kian, Ehsangar, & Izanloo, 2020). Ito, Kubota, and Ohtake (2019) provide one example in their study of the long-term impacts of the hidden curriculum on social preferences. In this study, the researchers identified instances of elementary school level educational practices that related to areas such as politics and ethics. These practices were made into a survey. For example, a survey item such as "There was a task in which students worked together as a group" was stated as being an indicator of the hidden curriculum around participation and cooperation in school because these activities in class required the students to collaborate with other students. Additional survey items included statements related to aspects such as cooperation and positive reciprocity outside of school. One example related to cooperation was "Working as a group results in greater achievements than working individually." The researchers worked with a Japanese market research company to contact and obtain survey results from 4,709 participants. Then the researchers matched their age-gender-region distribution to that of Japan and limited the age due to social influences[4]. The final group

[4] Participants over 60 experienced war-time and post war-time educational situations.

consisted of 3,621 respondents between the ages of 20 and 60 years old. The results were analyzed quantitatively to consider correlation between experiences in school and beliefs that carried into adulthood. Ito, Kubota, and Ohtake (2019) findings indicate that hidden curriculum influences social practices later in life. Students whose schools were determined to value student participation and cooperation, for example, became adults who were more likely to be cooperative with others.[5] This study shares the potential for long term impacts related to the hidden curriculum, supporting the need for consideration of this area.

While some argue that the hidden curriculum does not exist due to its inability to be clearly defined, Brownell shares that this curriculum can be very apparent when considered through the critical lens. This lens is helpful because the hidden curriculum frequently impacts the power structure present in schools. There is also general assumption that the hidden curriculum relates to negatives, such as racial bias. However, as demonstrated in the example above, the hidden curriculum pertains to many aspects of socialization and skills such as organization and punctuality (Cotton, Winter, & Bailey, 2013). As Schwab (2013) asserts, "Actions have consequences, and the consequences spread beyond the unit for which the decision was made" (p. 595).

A third type of curriculum present in schools is called the null curriculum. The null curriculum generally includes topics such as race, class, and gender that are not talked about in the explicit curriculum (Brownell, 2017). Eisner (2002) points out that "what is not taught can be as important in someone's life as what is taught, whether explicitly or implicitly" (p. 159). When information is not presented in schools, students do not have the opportunity to learn about it. If students are aware that certain areas are not included or discussed in schools, they may decide that these aspects are not important. Apple (1971) provides the example of "the nearly complete lack of treatment of or

[5] While this study considers a number of aspects in regards to the hidden curriculum and related social preferences, I have only discussed one to demonstrate the connections they made.

even reference to conflict as a social concern or as a category of thought in most available social studies curricula or in most classrooms observed" (p. 35). Race is one example of a social concern that is frequently left out of the curricula but is relevant for students. As a result, we must consider how and why teachers make certain moves in their teaching.

Considering the perspective of Whiteness in relation to the teacher is critical given that the majority of teachers in the United States are middle-class White women (Goldstein, 2014). Research suggests that White women have minimal meaningful contact with Black and Brown people prior to entering teaching (Watson, 2012). Matias (2013) found that many White teachers never had a teacher of color during their own educational experiences. This lack of experience seeing and experiencing people of color in different roles impacts the perception of White teachers when working with Black and Brown people (Knight, 2004).

Many White teachers state that they choose to become teachers out of concern for students, particularly students who have been marginalized (Matias & Zembylas, 2014; Matias, 2013). However, lack of personal experiences related to diversity combined with the overwhelming societal messages that Whites are superior and normative may lead White teachers to enter the classroom with misguided intent.

To investigate this, Bloom, Peters, Margolin, and Fragnoli (2015) considered the White racial identities of pre-service teachers through the use of open-ended questions regarding impressions of fieldwork schools, diversity in the classroom, and impact of the student teaching experience. Answers were analyzed using constant comparative analysis and situated into Helms' White racial identity framework. Participants in non-diverse student teaching locations were determined to fall into the contact schema more frequently than those in diverse student teaching settings. The teachers centering the contact schema do not acknowledge race, instead they maintain a stance of

neutrality in regards to racial issues. These findings suggest that teaching context influences racial identity for the White teacher (Bloom, Peters, Margolin, and Fragnoli, 2015).

King (1991) conducted a qualitative study involving the content analysis of teacher candidate responses to assess their understandings of social inequity. Between 1986 and 1988, King collected essay responses to prompts related to information from the Children's Defense Fund. She presented statistical comparisons such as "Compared to White Children, Black children are twice as likely to die in the first year of life." King followed this with the writing prompt: "How did our society get to be this way?" (King, 1991, p. 136). She found that her students' explanations of racial inequity fell into one of three categories. Students whose answers were in the first category described slavery as the basis for racial inequity. These answers indicated that inequity is passed down intergenerationally through Black and Brown families. Answers in the second category indicated that denial or lack of equal opportunity, such as lack of jobs and healthcare, are responsible for racial inequity. Normative racism and discrimination were presented as the basis for racial inequity in category three. In categories one and two, the responses focused on negative aspects of Black and Brown people, or Black pathology (Kendi, 2019). Category three is the only one that connects racism and inequity. King (1991) looked at students' answers twice, once in 1986 and once in 1988. Within these two samples, a total of 57 responses, only one answer fell into category three. The majority of the answers, 35, were located in category two. King shares that these responses indicate a lack of understanding regarding the existence and impact of systemic racism. She stresses the need for teacher educators to challenge the thinking of perspective teachers in order to address the misconceptions and misunderstandings around systemic inequity and racism. When teachers move into classrooms, their beliefs impact their words and actions.

Teachers and administrators provide examples of how to see, value, and engage with different types of people. Although taught in the same physical school environment, students are not all

treated the same. Students of color may be limited in regards to access to spaces within the school, information, and opportunities, which confirms that they are less than (Matias & Zembylas, 2014). Children notice to whom teachers attend in class, how behavior is interpreted, what supports are available and to whom they are provided. These are just a few examples of how RES happens in schools through indirect/implicit teaching (Anderson & Jones, 2020). While these lessons do not involve the use of a set plan or materials, they are incredibly influential and impact the racial identity formation of students (Freire, 2005; hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Love, 2019).

Without having the opportunity, or choosing to engage in an opportunity to learn about other cultures, to learn counternarratives to the White history of our nation, to engage with Black and Brown people in genuine ways, White teachers may continue to perpetuate racist systems (hooks,1994). Teachers may adopt a stance of colorblindness, supporting the idea that it is natural not to notice race (Matias, 2013). Colorblind approaches focus on the idea that one does not see color but sees everyone as human beings. In this approach, noticing race is wrong and stops any dialogue regarding race before it can begin (Armstrong & Wildman, 2008). As a result, colorblind mentality neglects the rich diversity present in America and pushes the idea of assimilation.

Teachers may project their bias and racial angst onto their students, as people of color serve are reminders of inequality that White teachers were previously able to ignore (Matias & Zembylas, 2014). Teachers may situate themselves as the victims of reverse racism, suggesting that their students see them only as a White oppressor instead of the caring teacher they propose to be. When teachers use this line of thinking, they are only considering racism on the individual level as opposed to the historical, societal, or institutional level (Scheurich & Young, 1997). Including this context would necessitate looking past their actions to the actions of Whites as a group and racist social systems such as housing, education, income, and incarceration (Matias & Zembylas, 2014). Considering these systems and the roles White teachers play in them may be jarring to teachers who

have not engaged in this type of work before. This is one reason teachers may not engage in direct discussions of race and racism in schools, but there are many others. While Love (2019) states that "antidarkness can happen without dark children in the room" (p. 14), some White teachers may believe that multicultural education is only relevant in settings that contain diverse populations (DiAngelo, 2018). White teachers need to critically reflect on their practices regardless of their student populations, but this type of self-reflection can be challenging.

Some White teachers may hesitate to act due to concerns of doing or saying the wrong thing. White teachers express concerns about being seen or identified as racist if they discuss issues of race (Cosier, 2019; Epstein, 2019) or demonstrate a lack of understanding about the nuances of racism (DiAngelo, 2018; Seidl & Hancock, 2011; Sue et al., 2007). Utt and Tochluk (2020) acknowledge that White teachers will make mistakes, which may negatively impact relationships and trust with others. However, they state that instead of leading to disengagement, White teachers can engage in accountability through apologizing and continuing to improve. hooks (1994) points out that mistakes are a part of change. If we wait until we are sure no mistakes will be made, change will not happen. Research is one avenue that could be used to advance this change.

White teachers may struggle with their connections to the history of White racism in America and how to work for changing without perpetuating existing racist practices (Boyd, 2020). Utt and Tochluk (2020) share that White teachers may experience shame or guilt, leading to self-isolation from their White peers. Additionally, teachers in this position may engage in severe self-critique and be unable to develop a positive racial self. According to DiAngelo (2018), the interruption in the racially familiar leads to racial stress for which these teachers are unprepared. As a result of growing up without acknowledging or addressing the existence of racism, White people lack the stamina to engage in discussions regarding race. DiAngelo (2018) terms this White fragility.

Taking Action

To do this, White teachers must know themselves first. White teachers need to participate in critical self-reflection in order to consider their own identity and beliefs (Matias, 2013). As Sue et al. (2007) state "the prerequisite for cultural competence has always been racial self-awareness" (p. 283). Self-reflection is not the norm or expectation for White teachers at this time. Instead, teacher preparation programs and professional development opportunities for in-service teachers frequently focuses on reflection practices relative to instruction and pedagogy, not on the beliefs and dispositions that guide those practices (e.g., Xiao & Tobin, 2018). hooks (1994) asserts that a "luxury and privilege of the role of teacher/professor today is the absence of any requirement that we be self-actualized" (p. 17). This mentality is harmful to teachers and students. However, self-reflection is just one step of a lifelong process for change.

Love (2019) states that understanding the workings of racism and White privilege are a step in the direction of justice, but they are not all that is needed. Freire (2005) also pushes teachers to move beyond feelings and intuitions into action. He states that, in addition to the academic curriculum, teachers have social and political aspects to teach, which is not possible when they maintain a stance of neutrality. He challenges teachers to recognize their roles as "political militants" (p. 103).

Action can take a number of different forms. Matias and Zembylas (2014) suggest that White teachers gradually commit to working on anti-racist projects. This option creates a challenge in the educational arena, as teachers are often required to work with and support students from a variety of racial and cultural groups as soon as they enter the classroom. Teachers have taken steps such as diversifying books read by students and related discussion prompts (Borsheim-Black & Sarigianides, 2019), engaging in book groups about race and Whiteness (Case 2012), building relationships with likeminded peers (Utt & Tochluk, 2020) and engaging in self-reflective practices.

Haviland (2008) advocates for engaging in meta-processing activities, such as those listed above, as a means of making changes to the ways White teachers think, talk, and interact with students.

Yancy (2012) advocates for a more direct approach of marking Whiteness. He challenges White people to call out Whiteness when they see it as a means of increasing awareness and understanding its prevalence and impacts on a daily basis. Because Whiteness is normalized, many White people do not see themselves as raced, and as a result, do not see themselves as active participants in the "workings of race" (p. 9). Once White people are able to notice and call out Whiteness, they see it everywhere, according to Yancy (2012). Engaging in this challenge allows White people to challenge the social constructions of power and privilege embedded in Whiteness through the unmasking of daily interactions and encounters, beliefs and actions that are wrongly believed to be racially neutral.

Regardless of how they start the process, White teachers need to focus on their beliefs and actions within the classroom, as well as consider how these transfer to the world outside the classroom walls so they can advocate for change there (hooks, 1994). Freire (2005) stresses the importance of teachers knowing their students beyond the classroom, understanding where they come from and what they bring to the classroom. He stresses that children bring a wealth of opportunities for contributing to the thinking and actions in the classroom through their language and world knowledge regardless of their background. Knowing students as individuals and hearing their individual voices demonstrates value (hooks, 1994).

Loyd and Gaither (2018) indicate that there is a missed opportunity to consider RES and Whiteness. Although a change in thinking can be difficult and cause discomfort, Whiteness must be studied (hooks, 1994). As Haviland (2008) states, "Feeling comfortable did not lead to change or exploration but instead supported the status quo in which Whites dominate" (p. 48). She further discusses how "presenting multicultural issues in ways that make people feel only guilt or discomfort,

without presenting them with viable options for how to act on these new understandings, is irresponsible and ineffective" (52) as the teachers use particular verbal and behavioral moves to avoid or actively reinforce ideas of racism and Whiteness. One option for White teachers to engage in the work of considering Whiteness and working towards a positive White racial identity is through the use self-study as a methodological approach.

Helms (1993) specifically calls on White researchers to consider their own issues of race and cross-cultural perceptions. Ball (2012) reminds us that conducting research is important to advance knowledge and that we must also act on this research to improve education and work for the public good. Engaging in personal research through conducting a self-study supports teachers in improving in both of these areas. In self-study teachers consider their positionality, beliefs, and teachings while making positive change in their teaching methods and thinking.

Self-Study

While there are many options for studying the practice of teaching, self-study provides a well conceptualized methodology for connecting research and teaching with the goal of improving teaching practice and student outcomes. At the same time, Stump, Peercy, and Bullock (2018) share that "self-study is by nature abstract, and while there is a general perception of what does and does not count as self-study, there is not a concrete definition or linear process that has to be adhered to" (p. 69). As a result, every self-study should be defined and described in detail. Self-study criteria and examples are presented below.

LaBoskey (2004) presents a framework that incorporates a number of aspects for the researcher to consider regarding self-study. The first two key criteria proposed by LaBoskey are that the research is initiated by and focused on teachers in relation to their students and that the study is improvement-aimed. Dinkelman, Margolis, and Sikkenga (2006) demonstrate these criteria in their case and self-study hybrid, which focused on their transitions from working as classroom teachers

to becoming teacher educators in the university. Two of the authors, Margolis and Sikkenga, conducted independent self-studies about their transitions from classroom teachers to teacher educators. Margolis and Sikkenga worked with the third author, Dinkelman, to combine their self-study findings to create a collective narrative in the form of a case study. The authors explicitly state that the mutual work allowed for reflexivity that impacted the direction of both the self-studies and the case study. Margolis and Sikkenga used data including semi-structured interviews, observational field notes from Dinkelman, and artifacts, such as assignments to study their struggles with the transitions in positions and settings. They worked to improve their practices as a means of supporting themselves and their students. While both Margolis and Sikkenga had very different experiences, similar themes around university support, requirements, and expectations emerged. Kitchen (2005) began her self-study in order to reflect on her experiences as a teacher educator. She focused on developing empathy for preservice teachers and working to make preservice teachers the focus in the teacher education program in which she taught. In both of these studies, the teacher researchers focused their research on their personal experiences and artifacts to improve their practices related to their teaching. These studies demonstrate LaBoskey's (2004) assertion that, in conducting self-study, "we wish to transform ourselves first so that we might be better situated to help transform our students" (p. 820).

To do this work, LaBoskey (2004) also indicates that an interactive process, involving colleagues, texts, and engagement with previous work to continually interrogate our practices. Multiple, mainly qualitative, methods are often used to ensure the inclusion of different perspectives on the topic being considered in a self-study. Freese (2006) and Cochran-Smith et al. (1999) show the possibilities around different types of data sources and methods that can be used in collaborative self-studies. The Freese study (2006) considered the development of a preservice teacher during a two-year program. In this study, Freese, a teacher educator, worked with a preservice teacher, who

is called Ryan throughout the paper, over the course of two years to consider complexities of becoming a teacher and supporting preservice teachers. Freese and Ryan analyzed journals, observation notes, and the preservice teacher's self-study paper using constant comparative analysis. While Freese and Ryan collaborated during this research study, the findings in this article focus on Freese, the teacher educator. Freese shares that she misinterpreted Ryan's behavior and obstacles he faced in the program, which impacted the support she provided him. She suggests that teacher educators can benefit from being self-reflective and incorporating activities to foster reflection with preservice teachers as a means of increasing awareness and opening communication.

The second study illustrating the range of possible methods is by Cochran-Smith, et al. Cochran-Smith and colleagues (1999) conducted a collaborative self-study focused on social justice issues in their university. The group of university faculty members used transcriptions of group meetings, emails, teaching and curriculum materials, among other items during the course of their multi-year study. Analysis methods included collaborative writing and presentation preparation in pairs, small groups, and as a whole group. As shown in the examples above, a variety of data sources and analysis methods can be used in self-study. Loughran (2004) points out that the chosen methods must be appropriate for the issue under consideration and the intent of the study. Decisions about chosen methods must be detailed due to the numerous options available and the need to ensure understanding and consistent application of the chosen methods.

The final criteria of self-study, according to LaBoskey (2004) is that the work must be formalized and shared with the community to open communication and discussion. In Cochran-Smith's (1999) study, participants focused initially on interrogating their own understandings of social justice. The group members then shifted to a community focus as they each chose a component of their classes to serve as a research site and eventually explored revisions for the teacher education program. Kitchen's (2005) move to center preservice teachers in teacher education is another

example of using work to engage with the greater community. These studies specifically detail how the work of self-study moves from the individual into larger spaces.

Because the self-study framework encourages collaboration and the use of myriad data sources and multiple methods, the studies conducted within this framework vary. The researcher must be specific about the data and analysis methods to ensure trustworthiness and rigor. The next section provides an overview of the types of data that can be used in a self-study, specifically in relation to teaching.

Self-Study Data

In considering teaching practices, teachers may have a large variety of data sources and types from which to choose, such as semi-structured interviews, journals, and course assignments (Dinkelman, Margolis, & Sikkenga, 2006) student work, reflections, lesson plans, and school documents and policy. The personal nature of self-study also lends itself to the inclusion of documents related to the researcher's context, such as personal reflections, work from outside of the school setting, and other artifacts that may provide insight into the researcher's thinking. The choice of what to include in the research and what to leave out should be purposeful and clearly justified as part of the design. For example, if the researcher is considering White racial identity, she may include assignments and documents created for students, parents and teachers because of the connection between these groups and RES. Other sources can include personal reflective artifacts such as journals. These are appropriate for considering White racial identity because of they allow the researcher to investigate her thoughts and words. Finally, any study examining White racial identity should consider the importance of contextual information, such as demographic information from the school and visuals related to the school because the context impacts how White teachers center and enact the different schemas of White identity development.

Many of the types of data used in self-study are text-based, such as transcripts of meetings, interviews, journal entries, and educational documents. However, other types of data may take the alternative forms of representation such as artifacts (e.g., Bager-Elsborg & Loads, 2016; Mannay, 2010). Elicitation is a method used in research that offers one way of putting words to different artifacts.

Elicitation

In its simplest terms, elicitation involves including a stimulus to encourage increased detail and depth in an interview (Henry & Fetters, 2012). Stimulus options include but are not limited to photographs, objects, videos, or music. Combining elicitation stimulus and open-ended questions allows the researcher to learn how the participant sees, understands, and experiences the world (Torre & Murphy, 2015). Additionally, alternative forms of representation broaden understanding and increase empathy, stimulate wonder, develop individual aptitudes, and provide a means for sharing and representing multiple perspectives (Eisner, 1997).

Harper (2002) found that including stimulus in the interview process can lead to longer, more comprehensive interviews that are less repetitive and less draining for the participants. While Pink (2013) states that visual research is not prescriptive, Torre and Murphy (2015) detail a general process for including art for elicitation in interviews. This process begins with identifying the research topic and participants. The researcher or participants then collect or create the art, or stimulus, which serves as a guide during the interview. Finally, the researcher analyzes the data from the interview, which may include transcripts and related visuals.

Alternately, Willig (2016) shares the option of having participants choose objects for elicitation, making the participants more active in the process. In her study, participants chose objects that related to their lives, and Willig used these objects as the focus of the interview instead of asking direct questions about the participants' experiences. Willig found that the use of objects led some

participants to consider aspects of related experiences with which they had not connected before. As some of the interview sessions felt more like counseling sessions, Willig notes that participants and researchers need to be made aware of this possibility before engaging in this type of interview. In regards to self-study, Willig's work demonstrates the potential for deepening discussions around topics with which the participant is very close.

Elicitation opens possibilities for creating a deeper understanding of oneself, which is beneficial in a self-study. Engaging with artifacts to elicit words allows the researcher to step back from her work and consider the artifact in relation to its original context as well as the current context while providing additional data sources in the form of transcripts. Elicitation may be conducted through the use of a critical friend as interviewer.

Critical Friends

Self-study challenges the researcher to interpret and reframe their own experiences, which comes with the risk of not considering additional viewpoints or being thorough/critical (Russell & Schusk, 2004)**.** As a result, consultation with a critical friend is imperative in self-study. The critical friend provides a view that the researcher may not have considered, opening the possibilities for clarification and reframing (Loughran, 2004). Critical friends can serve a number of different roles, and there are some important considerations when creating the critical friend relationship.

Foulger (2010) states that critical friends can support the researcher by discussing the current work, providing alternative perspectives, and sharing advice and criticism. The critical friend may be from inside or outside the research field but having a similar personal agenda and the ability to be honest are helpful when choosing a critical friend. Additionally, Kember, Ha, Lam, Lee, NG, Yan, and Yum (1997) discuss the importance of cooperation between teacher-researchers and critical friends. Both of these articles discuss the benefits of choosing a critical friend with complementary skills, which furthers thinking and discussion of the research topic. Martin and Russel (2018)

involve the use of a critical friend who is related to the research field and can share experiential insight with the researcher. In this study, Martin conducted a self-study with the support of Russel, a trusted friend and experienced supervisor, as a critical friend. The two engaged in conversations, with Russel encouraging analytic consideration of Martin's actions, which allowed Martin to rethink or reframe her teaching and supervising structures. The researchers state that conversations with a critical friend provided credibility to the study. In each of these cases, the researchers share the importance of being clear about the role of the critical friend to ensure a successful relationship.

Russell and Schusk (2004) found that power differentials may lead to an unwillingness to challenge or be challenged in regards to beliefs, a concern reported by others (Kember, et al., 1997). They advocate clear discussions regarding the type and amount of challenging in which the critical friend should plan to engage. Having clear expectations about the role of the critical friend prior to the start of the research and encouraging open discussions and regular check-ins throughout the research process may also be helpful in maintaining the relationship.

While critical friends may be involved throughout the process (Trumbull, 2004), Tidwell (2004) shares how a critical friend may be included in a more limited capacity. Tidwell used self-study to examine the operationalization of "valuing" students. She considered patterns in journals and instructional documentation and embedded these within stories of her work with three students. Tidwell shared the completed stories with her critical friend, a colleague, for feedback. Regardless of how critical friends are involved, there is consensus around their importance in self-study. Critical friends can be used in conjunction with elicitation to help transform artifacts into text-based data for analysis, and they can be used during analysis of data to help credibility and to extend thinking in self-analysis. Critical friends are frequently colleagues or friends with similar research interests

or shared experiences, who have engaged or are engaging in similar work, and who are able to communicate honestly and tactfully throughout the process in order to support the research. In some cases, texts may also serve as critical friends.

Texts as Critical Friends

Because Whiteness is often invisible to White people, the views of Black and Brown people are critical in the interrogation of Whiteness by White people (Yancy, 2012). Only by considering and reflecting on the views and critiques of Black and Brown people regarding White people and Whiteness can White people engage in reframing, or "seeing the situation through others' eyes in order to gain alternative perspectives" (Loughran, 2004), which is key to understanding the effects of Whiteness and racial privilege.

However, enlisting the help and support of a Black or Brown person to work in this role is not appropriate. Yancy (2012) shares that when White people seek education around Blackness from Black and Brown people, frustration arises because Black and Brown people understand that it is not their job to educate and support White people through the struggles of critical self-reflection. Additionally, Saad (2018) states that using Black people, Indigenous people, and People of Color (BIPOC) to "further a White person's agenda" is a form of tokenism, which objectifies BIPOC and reduces them to a thing of race (p. 91). One way to consider and reflect on the voices of Black and Brown people without putting them through the trauma of serving as a guide is to use texts.

There are many Black and Brown scholars who discuss Whiteness and offer insight into the experiences of Black and Brown people (e.g., Baldwin, 1955; Yancy 2012). Engaging with these texts is important to help White people to understand their roles in racism. Reading the works of these, and other Black and Brown scholars, can lead to a shift in a White reader's White racial identity. Typically, these texts do not focus on providing guidance for White people in regards to working through their whiteness, as this is not the job of Black and Brown people. However, scholars

such as Saad (2018) and Helms (2020) offer guidance to White people who are interested in considering their Whiteness. Their books share the perspectives of some Black and Brown people. In addition, these authors provide questions and writing prompts intended to help White people as they consider their racial identities.

As discussed earlier, Helms (2020) details a White racial identity development framework which she presents most recently in a book that offers reflective questions for White people to consider. Saad (2020) offers White people a way to consider their Whiteness and role in the system of racism through a 28-day guided book. This work started in 2018 as an online journaling challenge. Saad (2018) posted daily prompts encouraging people to engage in self-reflection related to their position in regards to White supremacy. She also offered online discussion spaces for people to share their journaling and related thoughts. At the end of the challenge Saad compiled her journaling prompts into a workbook, which she offers for free online. Saad (2020) continued to develop her work into a book that offers more context, stories, expanded definitions, and additional resources. Saad offers this resource to anyone who benefits from White supremacy and details how experiences of this work differ depending on an individual's access to White privilege.

Using texts as critical friends looks different than interacting with a person as a critical friend. In order to engage in conversation with a text, the researcher must facilitate both sides of the conversation. To do this, the researcher may use the text as a basis for reflective writing. In the case of Helms and Saad, the researcher may respond to the prompts and questions in conjunction with reading the text. The researcher may return to the text with thoughts and questions of her own and engage the text in considering these. More reflective writing may result. This reflective writing can be analyzed as a source of data.

To analyze the words produced during elicitation, as well as reflective writing, a method for analysis must allow for the consideration of multiple types of data. As is the case for data identification, it is imperative to select analysis strategies that align with the focus of the study.

Self-Study Analysis

The nature of self-study lends itself to a variety of analysis methods. In order to conduct research that is rigorous and trustworthy, consideration must be given to the method of analysis in relation to the data sources and research method. In considering a self-study using elicitation data and reflective writing, reflective thematic analysis provides a strong option. It provides for multiple passes of the data and coding throughout the research process, leading to deep, inductive analysis that is necessary in self-study.

Thematic analysis is an umbrella term for the different approaches to thematic analysis and researchers should be clear about the type of thematic analysis being used. Braun, Clarke, Hayfield, and Terry (2018) discuss differences in schools of thematic analysis while understanding that each school includes a number of approaches. Over time, they have refined their method and offered insight into different schools of thematic analysis and their uses (Braun & Clarke, 2020; Braun & Clarke, 2019; Clarke & Braun, 2017). These descriptions are helpful in defining the type of thematic analysis being used and the justification of its use. Braun, Clarke, Hayfield, and Terry (2018) offer a summary of what they call the coding reliability approach, which is based on "bridging the divide" between quantitative and qualitative methods. The approach of Boyatzis (1998) allows quantitatively focused researchers to incorporate open-ended methods into their designs. Boyatzis (1998) stresses that thematic analysis is a process that can assist researchers in using different qualitative methods and allows translation of qualitative data into quantitative data. The coding reliability approach stresses the importance of reliability, as well as replicability, and the coding is guided by a codebook with predetermined themes (Braun, Clarke, Hayfield, & Terry, 2018), which may be

used by multiple coders to ensure accuracy in coding. Researchers using this approach also take steps to minimize their influence in the quest for objective data analysis.

At the other end of the thematic analysis spectrum is *reflective thematic analysis*. Braun and Clarke (2019) state that, in this method, researcher subjectivity is considered a resource for analysis, not something to be overcome. Themes are generated through a process of coding and writing and revisiting data multiple times. Braun and Clarke (2019) stress the importance of engaging thoughtfully and reflectively with the data throughout the process in order to generate well defined themes that go deeper than the content of the data. According to Braun and Clarke (2012), themes should relate to the research question and represent a patterned meaning from the data set. They provide steps and questions to ensure that the themes developed are strong enough to stand on their own while also being connected to other themes. The process involves revisiting the data and themes multiple times to ensure that the themes fit with the data and the research question and are well defined with clear explanations and boundaries.

While there are many approaches to thematic analysis that fall in the middle of this spectrum, many of these approaches include an early development of themes, a focus on coding reliability, but do not include the focus on researcher subjectivity included in reflective thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019). For self-study, reflective thematic analysis is a good fit due to the focus on the individual researcher and the active nature of self-study. Reflective thematic analysis has been refined by Braun and Clarke over many years (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2012; Clarke & Braun, 2017; Braun & Clarke, 2019) to clarify different aspects and address critiques of the method. They offer insight into issues of quality in using this process, as well as guidelines to ensure deliberate, reflexive engagement that produces meaningful outcomes (Braun & Clarke, 2020).

The current self-study adopts the use of elicitation and critical friends to generate data and reflective thematic analysis strategies to further an understanding of the ways one teacher's White identity shifts over time and contexts. Helm's White identity theory guides the study. The next section details the methods used.

3 Methodology

The purpose of the study is to inform the field about White teacher identity through a self-study. Engaging in personal research through conducting a self-study supports teachers in considering their own issues of race and cross-cultural perceptions (Helms, 1993), as well as improving education and working for the public good (Ball, 2012). In self-study, teachers consider their positionality, beliefs, and teachings while making positive change in their teaching methods and thinking. As discussed in the literature review, self-study has five main criteria (LaBoskey, 2004).

Figure 2

Self-Study key criteria

1. Initiated by and focused on teachers in relation to their students
2. Improvement-aimed
3. Interactive process, involving colleagues, texts, and engagement with previous work to continually interrogate our practices
4. Multiple, mainly qualitative, methods used to ensure the inclusion of different perspectives on the topic being considered in a self-study
5. Work must be formalized and shared with the community to open communication and discussion

Note. LaBoskey, 2004. The methodology of self-study and its theoretical underpinnings.

Establishing trustworthiness in self-study can be challenging because data generation and analysis may occur simultaneously, and the research topic may evolve over time (Tidwell, 2004). In addition, studying oneself creates a situation where much of the data is created and analyzed by myself (Ham & Kane, 2004). The focus on one voice and one person's perception sets up the potential for a lack of in-depth analysis and critical reflection. However, the criteria for self-study encourage establishing trustworthiness. Specifically, the fourth criteria involves the use of multiple research methods to reduce subjective bias in data interpretation. The fifth criteria of self-study is demonstrating rigor and trustworthiness, which should be detailed in the proposal (Mena & Russell, 2017).

Mena and Russell (2017) discuss issues of trustworthiness in a review of sixty-five studies presented at the 10th International Conference on Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices. While all of the studies mentioned trustworthiness, only 60% of the studies detailed their procedures for ensuring trustworthiness. The most common procedures for establishing trustworthiness in these self-studies included the use of a critical friend and triangulation of data. Mena and Russell state that "triangulation involves re-examination of data" (p. 115). Other credibility processes included by the researchers in this study were the use of exemplars, or previously defined and validated categories, negative case analysis verification, iterative questioning, and constant comparative method.

For my study, I utilized a critical friend to support the elicitation process as discussed earlier and as a form of member checking, as she reviewed my analysis throughout the data generation and analysis process (Figure 10). I employed the texts of Saad (2020) and Helms (2020) to guide my thinking and provide outside perspectives for my work. While the journals I wrote in using these texts were my words, they were influenced by their thinking and prompting. I incorporated multiple methods in my study, specifically elicitation, reflective writing, and reflective thematic analysis, which are detailed in the following sections. Incorporating these processes in my research ensured rigor and trustworthiness in my research.

Data Sources

I used multiple data sources for this study including artifacts from my three teaching contexts, discussions with a critical friend, texts as critical friends, and my researcher journal.

Artifacts

For this research, I selected artifacts, which served as the stimuli for the conversations with my critical friend. I purposely chose artifacts from my time as a middle school teacher and as a teacher researcher. Initially, I planned to perform a content analysis of my teaching documents and artifacts. To gather my data, I went through my files of assignments and other documents I had created when I taught at two different middle schools and at the university. I put assignments, handouts, and other items that seemed like they would relate to my research topic into a new folder entitled "Dissertation Data." I also looked at visual pieces, including collages, drawings, and notes I created during these times. Since my plan at that time was to analyze the actual documents, I included many different sources for a total of 43 text-based artifacts and 6 visual artifacts. As my research design changed, and these artifacts became stimulus for elicitation, I revisited them to re-assess the relevance of this data.

I looked at each of the pieces I had put into the Dissertation Data folder and considered their usefulness as stimulus for elicitation. I removed some artifacts due to their repetitive nature. For example, I had chosen a number of quizzes I created for a Social Studies class in my initial data set. I realized that many of them represented the same creation process and would likely lead to similar discussion points, so I chose one of them to keep for the refined data set. Other artifacts were represented multiple times. For example, I initially included the syllabus and different assignments from a class I taught at the university. As I reconsidered the artifacts, I decided to keep the syllabus but not the assignments because each assignment is listed in the syllabus. This choice enabled me to include each assignment for discussion without having an overwhelming number of artifacts for elicitation. I also added a couple of artifacts, specifically the website of the private school and a school specific Twitter account of an assistant principal at the public school as a means of virtually revisiting these two schools. I have not visited these schools in a number of years, and considering these

contexts was important, as my teaching contexts impacted the assignments and artifacts I created. I did not include the website for the university because I am currently active there and do not need to revisit that context. As a result of these adjustments, my final set included 25 text-based artifacts, 5 visual artifacts, and 2 social media sites. I have separated these artifacts and websites into three groups based on the context in which I was teaching. The final artifact sets, shown in Figure 3, are discussed below and presented in tables in the appendices.

Figure 3

Artifacts for stimuli

Private School	**Public School**	**University**
• Life Skills Handouts: ➢Organization, ➢Communication, ➢Being a Successful Student • Presenting Notes to Students • PTA Presentation • School Website	• Social Studies Vocab • Math Projects • Behavior Tracker • GMSA Handouts • Parent/Student Surveys • Collage • School Website	• ECEE 3600 Syllabus • Inputs Presentations • "How do I reach mom?" visual • Jellyfish Notes visual • Writing Retreat Collage

Note. Detailed lists of artifacts used for elicitation during discussions

Artifacts as a Private School Teacher

In the first conversation with my critical friend, I utilized artifacts I created during my time as a middle grades support teacher in a private, Christian, majority White school in a wealthy sub-urb of A major city in the southeast. I entered this school as my first teaching job after graduating from my undergraduate program and taught there for five years, from 2002-2007. Artifacts in this set included seven handouts I created to address life skills, including organization, goal setting, stress management, study skills, communicating with adults, surviving middle school, and being a

successful student. I used these handouts in small group sessions for students who were identified by their teachers or parents as struggling with these skills. These handouts represented information that I considered most important and best practices at the time in each of these areas. As a result, they provided insight into my thinking about students and student behavior during this time in my teaching career.

Additionally, I included handouts I made for teachers and parents to support their children in experiencing success in schools. I created the handout for teachers as part of a professional development session relating to differentiation and meeting the needs of individual students. I created the handout for parents in response to a request from another school in the same system. The school sent an email asking for a teacher to come to a parent teacher association (PTA) meeting and speak about supporting students at home. These two artifacts are important because they provided insight into my perception of best practices, as well as how to convey information about school to other teachers and parents.

Finally, I included the website for this school as an artifact in this group. I taught in this school over ten years ago. While I visited some of my co-workers there over the years, I had not immersed myself in the context of the school in a number of years. Visiting the school website provided a stimulus for me to consider the school context as I looked at artifacts from my time teaching there. Due to the number of years it had been since I left this school, I decided to look at the website as it appeared when I worked there. I used a website called the Wayback Machine (archive.org), which maintains an internet archive of web pages, books, videos, and images. I searched the name of my school and the city, which resulted in a list of results. I chose the correct website and was able to select the years that I taught at the school. When the image of the website came up, I recognized it immediately. I looked at the available images from archive.org from 2002 through 2007, since that is when I taught at the school. The website remained the same throughout this time. Many

of the links on this page lead to further information, including the school calendar and admissions information. However, others, such as Student Showcase, indicate only that there is information coming soon.[6] I visited the current website for the school to see if it provided additional context.

The current website from 2021, provides more information about the academics, spiritual aspects of the school, and links to other social media accounts. The current site also includes images of the school and the students and teachers. These are current images, as the students and teachers are wearing masks and have plastic shields around the desks, which is indicative of the COVID-19 protocols that are currently in place.

The school website from 2002-2007, when I taught at the school, was much different from the current site for the school. The original website provided limited information, mainly in words, with minimal images. The images included the school logo and clip art representing a topic. For example, the link for general information included an image of an open book with a question mark on it. This site did provide some basic information such as the size of the school and the mission statement. It did not include information about academics or images of the students or the school. The current site provided more information about specific aspects of the school, such as academics, and the images provided a look into the context of the school beyond what was described in words. While neither version of the school's website completely captured my time at the school, taken together these sites provided insight into the context in which I was teaching and provided artifacts for the discussion with my critical friend.

Notably, this data set does not include any assignments directly related to academic content. This school used a pre-made curriculum during my time teaching there. As a result, the assignments

[6] I took a screen shot of the image of the home page from April 1, 2004 because that was in the middle of my time at the school. I intended to include the image of the website here, but the image contains lots of identifying information. As a result, I decided not to include the image here.

and teaching materials were already prepared and provided to the teachers. I did not incorporate outside resources in my lessons, so I do not have any to include here. The lack of these artifacts provided a space for discussion during the conversation and can be addressed by the third conversation question.

Artifacts as a Public-School Teacher

In the second conversation with my critical friend, I used artifacts I created during my time as a middle school teacher in a public, racially diverse school in a major city in the southeast. I transitioned to this school in 2008 and worked there for seven years, until 2015. Artifacts in this set included assignments related to academic content including three Social Studies quizzes, one Social Studies assignment, and two Math projects. The Social Studies quizzes represented topics of Canada, Colonialism, and Aztec, Maya, and Inca. Topically, these selections covered a variety of information and showed how I conveyed different ethnic groups and their experiences. Additionally, I created these quizzes from a list of words provided by the state standards at the time, but I chose the formatting, definitions, and examples included in the quizzes. The Math projects were also based on the state standards. I created them to connect the Math content we taught in class with real life. I chose these artifacts because they speak to what I considered important for the students in these classes.

This set of artifacts also included other text documents including a behavior tracking sheet, parent and student surveys, and handouts from a session I conducted at a state teaching conference. The behavior sheet was a completed sample that I used to show teachers how to fill out the document. This artifact shows how I considered student behavior during this time. The parent and student surveys provided insight into what information I thought was important to request from parents and students outside of academic content areas. The handouts from the state teaching conference

conveyed my perception of best practices around teaching students identified as needing special education supports, as well as how to share information about these best practices with other teachers and parents.

Additionally, I included a visual-based artifact in this set. I made a collage about teaching. I created the collage on my own as a way to process my teaching situation as I struggled to decide if I should continue to teach or take some time off. This collage spoke to my thoughts on teaching and how I saw myself as a teacher at that time.

As with the private school context, I decided to include the website for this school as an artifact in this group. I taught in this school more than five years ago, and I believed that visiting the website would provide a stimulus for me to consider the school context as I looked at my artifacts from my time teaching there. I returned to the Wayback Machine (archive.org) and searched the school's name and location. I found the website from August of 2008, which was when I started teaching at the school. The webpage includes an image of the school, as well as a information about the school, how to get help with homework, and PTA (parent teacher association) information. While this information was helpful, there were certain aspects of my experiences that were not represented with this version of the site. I decided to visit the current website for this school. When I searched for the current website, I found out that the school had relocated and changed names. As a result, there is no current website for the school.

In an effort to create a more complete picture, I google searched the school name and found a number of Twitter accounts related to the school, including one for the band and one hosted by an assistant principal. As I read through the account hosted by the assistant principal, I found that it included information about student activities, as well as images of staff, students, and activities that provided a more complete picture of this teaching context than the archived website alone. As a result, I decided to include this account as an additional artifact for elicitation. I understand that using

one person's twitter account provides a specific/small view into the context of the school. However, when combined with the website from archive.org, these artifacts provide adequate elicitation stimulus to provide context for this teaching time and context.

To maintain anonymity, I decided not to include images of the website or Twitter account and removed any identifying information that may have come up during the discussions.

Artifacts as a Teacher Educator

Artifacts from my time as a doctoral student and teacher researcher were discussed in the third conversation. My critical friend and I analyzed text-based documents including handouts I created to teach preservice teachers about topics related to working with students identified as having special needs. Topics included Universal Design for Learning (UDL), differentiation, and behavior management, which included case studies drawn from my own teaching experiences. I created these handouts to provide information about the topic and support a lesson of one to one and a half hours, which I taught as a guest speaker. Because I created these handouts for preservice teachers, they presented the information I believed was most relevant and represented the best practices at the time. They were also based on my experiences as a teacher, which means they reflected the experiences and ideas I held onto since leaving my job as a full-time classroom teacher. An additional text-based document I included was a syllabus from a literacy class I taught to pre-service teachers. Because I had not taught this class before, much of the work was based on of the assignments given by the previous teacher. However, I collaborated with a peer to update the assignments and include a focus on equity, so this work was reflective of my White racial identity. Because the syllabus included descriptions of all of the assignments I used in this class and this document was used for elicitation, I did not include copies of each assignment.

I included three visual-based artifacts in this set. Specifically I chose a visual I created called "How do I reach mom?" as I thought about how to reach veteran teachers, a sketch I made

called “Jellyfish Notes” as I worked as a substitute teacher, and a collage quilt I created during a writing retreat I attended as part of a class. “How do I reach mom?” was a visual of brainstorming I did as I considered topics for professional learning sessions for teachers. This visual-based artifact provided insight into my views of teachers and how to support them and their students in being successful as I worked through my doctoral program. “Jellyfish Notes” was a drawing that I created over the course of a week. After a discussion with a professor who talked about the in and out movement of thoughts and planning around research, I felt compelled to draw a jellyfish. After I started sketching the jellyfish, I added notes around it of what was on my mind, quotes from teachers with whom I was subbing, and questions. This visual-based artifact provided insight into my thinking as I was becoming a teacher researcher. The final visual-based artifact in this set was a set of collages I created over the course of a two-day writing retreat. I created one collage the night I arrived, a second the following morning, and a third the second evening. I joined these collages together into one large piece I called a collage quilt. At the time of the retreat, I was trying to think through ideas around race and my positionality that would not come as words. As a result, this visual-based artifact related directly to the focus of my current research. These artifacts provided insight into my thoughts on teaching and my White racial identity in a format other than word-based text.

Overall, the artifacts discussed above provided insight into my White racial identity development during my years as a teacher and teacher researcher. These artifacts served as elicitation stimulus during discussions with my critical friend. Using artifacts as elicitation stimulus, in conjunction with open-ended questions provides insight into the researcher’s perceptions and understandings of the world (Torre & Murphy, 2015).

Elicitation Data

Elicitation involves the use of stimuli during a discussion to increase the detail and depth of the discussion (Henry & Fetters, 2012). Harper (2002) found that including stimulus in the interview process can lead to longer, more comprehensive interviews that are less repetitive and less draining for the participants. Additionally, including alternative forms of representation broaden understanding and provide a means for sharing and representing multiple perspectives (Eisner, 1997). Using elicitation in self-study opens possibilities for furthering understanding of oneself, particularly in regards to historical and current contexts. In this study, elicitation was conducted through the use of a critical friend as interviewer, as well as texts as reflective writing with critical friends and reflective writing in a researcher journal.

Critical Friend

For this research, I engaged with a critical friend. According to Loughran (2004), the critical friend provides opportunities for clarification and reframing by providing a different view than that of the researcher. As Loughran (2004) states, "Being personally involved in experiences can limit one's ability to recognize oneself as a living contradiction and therefore impact the self-study" (p. 31). A critical friend can serve a number of different roles during the research process. Additionally, aspects such as the critical friend's relationship to the research topic and the researcher must be considered when creating the critical friend relationship. The critical friend serves in integral role by both supporting and challenging the researcher. Because the specifics of the critical friend's role can vary from study to study, defining the role of the critical friend is important.

I chose a doctoral student in my program who self-identified as White and had been engaging in work around Whiteness and her racial identity, including self-reflection, for over a year. Prior to my dissertation work, we had engaged in discussions, readings, and writings about this topic in classes and at writing retreats. We conducted a conference presentation about identity earlier this

year. In addition, we have shared teaching experience, and her schedule allowed for the time commitment required for this work. Based on her current research interests and our prior work together, I knew we would be able to engage in discussion around topics of race, Whiteness, and identity honestly and thoughtfully.

Prior to our first dissertation discussion, I met with my critical friend to discuss the specifics of her role in this process. We also discussed what she needed from me in order to ensure that my critical friend was able to be probing and supportive and that this process was beneficial to both of us. During the initial conversation, we reviewed the consent form. I asked my critical friend if she had other agreements that needed to be in place prior to beginning. She stated that she did not have any.

My critical friend consented to engaging in five semi-structured conversations. These lasted between one and two hours each. The first four conversations related to the artifacts I chose to represent each stage of my teaching career thus far. I encouraged my critical friend to share her thoughts and impressions honestly and to challenge me if I seem to be avoiding or focusing too heavily on certain aspects of the artifacts or discussion points during the conversations. She presented these challenges as questions and observations, which encouraged conversation and the sharing of ideas between us. She asked clarifying questions and shared her own stories related to our discussion. Our open sharing, questioning, and challenging ensured a comprehensive understanding and conversation related to the artifacts for each context. Beginning with the second interview, I included member checking as a part of the process.

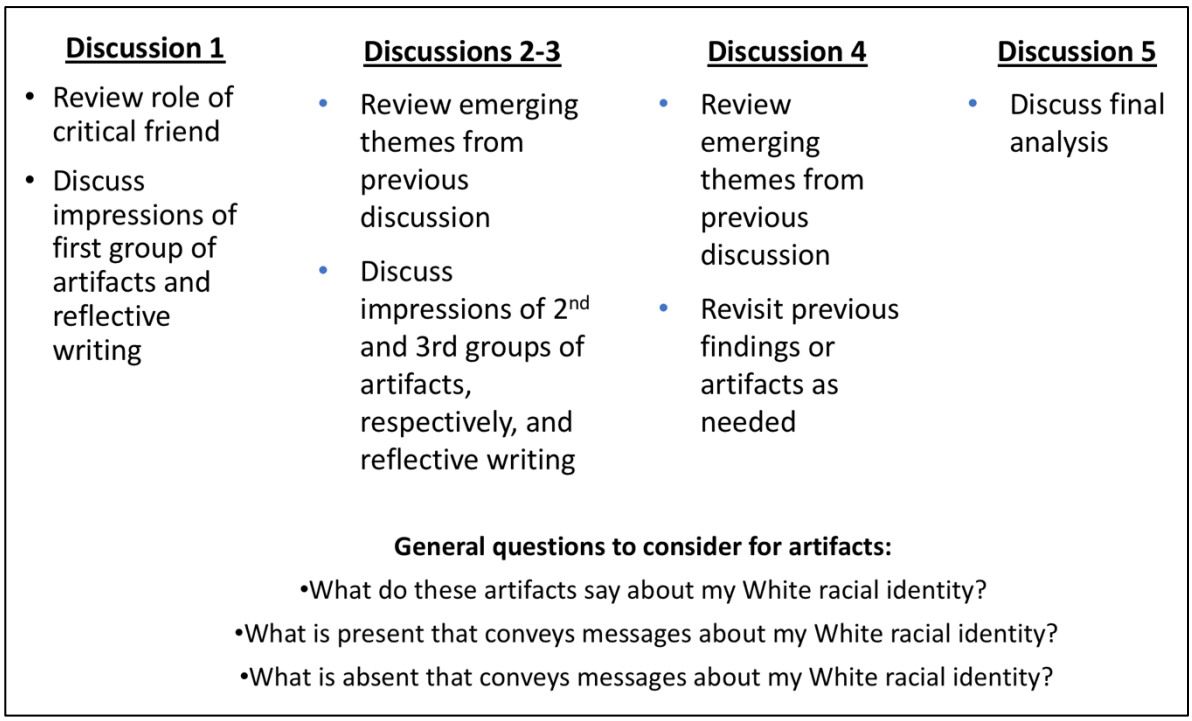
We had a plan to pause the conversation and recording if it became too intense or if one or both of us experienced strong feelings about the artifacts or conversation. However, this situation did not occur. The recordings were paused for restroom breaks as needed.

I sent the artifacts to my critical friend prior to the interview so she could review them and come up with thoughts or questions for the conversation. I also provided the following questions for her to consider alongside the artifacts:

1. What do these artifacts say about my White racial identity?
2. What is present that conveys messages about my White racial identity?
3. What is absent that conveys messages about my White racial identity?

Figure 4

Elicitation cycle with critical friend



Note. Detailed steps showing what was included in each discussion

As shown in Figure 4, my critical friend and I discussed the artifacts and emerging themes for each context. In the fourth conversation, we also revisited previous artifacts and discussed our general thoughts about the research process and similarities and differences we noticed in the different sets of artifacts. The fifth conversation took place at the end of my analysis. In this conversation

I shared my overall research findings and elicited feedback from my critical friend regarding my findings, as a final opportunity for member checking.

Another form of elicitation I used in this research was through the use of reflective writing with texts as critical friends.

Texts as Critical Friends

Whiteness is often invisible to White people. As a result, considering and reflecting on the views and critiques of Black and Brown people regarding White people and Whiteness is a significant component in the interrogation of Whiteness by White people (LaBoskey, 2004 & Yancy, 2012). Enlisting the help and support of a Black or Brown person to work in this role is not appropriate because it objectifies and causes potential harm to Black and Brown people. Using texts by Black and Brown scholars is one way to ensure inclusion and reflection on Black and Brown voices without putting anyone through the trauma of serving as a guide.

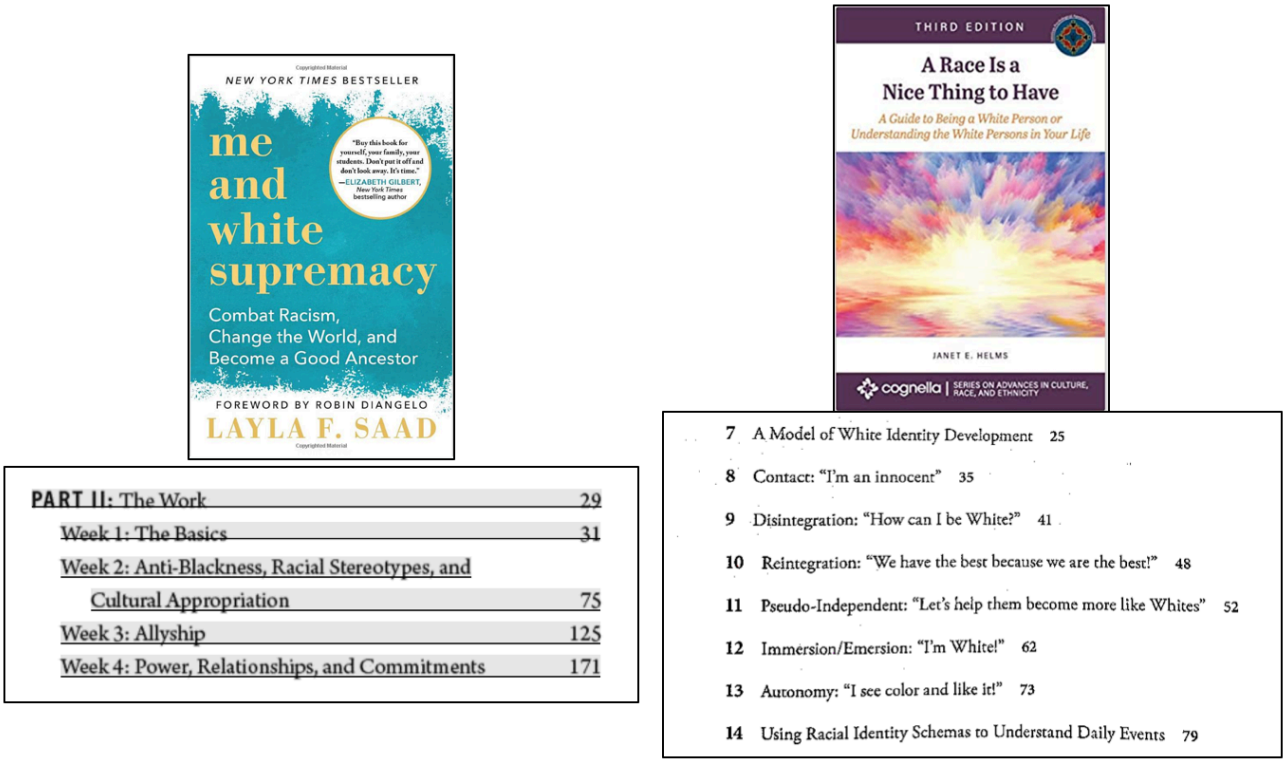
While many Black and Brown scholars discuss Whiteness and provide insight into the lived experiences of Black and Brown people (e.g., Baldwin, 1955; Yancy 2012), these texts do not provide guidance for White people who want to consider their own racial identities. Providing guidance and support is not the job of Black and Brown people. Some scholars, such as Helms (2020) and Saad (2018), offer their insight and guidance to White people. These scholars have written books that include the perspectives of some Black and Brown people, as well as questions and writing prompts to help White people consider their racial identities.

I used reflective writing with the texts of two scholars of color, Helms (2020) and Saad (2020). In choosing these texts, I do not intend to suggest that these scholars represent the voices of all Black and Brown people. I understand the importance of including the perspective of Black and Brown people, and I graciously take the support and guidance these women offer as a means of considering two perspectives. I chose the most recent versions of these texts because they offered

the most recent insights and developments of the writers works. I worked through sections of both of these resources, as shown in Figure 5**,** reading and engaging in reflective thinking and writing. The image shows the sections I focused on from each text. My rationale for the sections I chose are discussed below.

Figure 5

Texts as critical friends



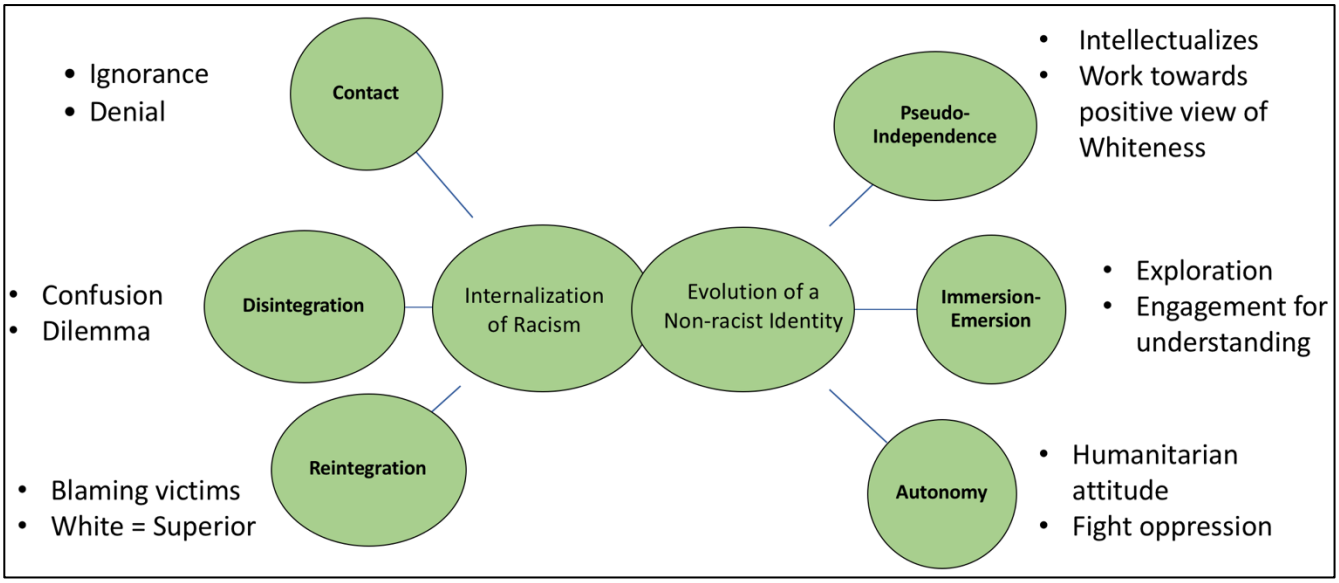
Note. These texts were used as critical friends. The boxes in the images on the left and right show which sections were used for reflective writing.

Helms' (2020) book details a White racial identity development framework, as presented in the introduction. Helms' original model, first proposed in 1984, was criticized for its developmental, stage-based modeling (Leach, Behrens, & LaFleur, 2002) and focus on how White people considered and engaged with Black and Brown people (Rowe, Bennet, Atkinson, 1994). She has refined her model over the years to address these critiques. Figure 6 shows the current framework

proposed by Helms (2020). This framework consists of two phases, internalization of racism and evolution of a non-racist identity. Each phase includes three schemas, which provide details on how White racial identity may be enacted. According to Helms, the schemas are fluid and changing and are present in White people all the time. Different schemas are centered depending on the context, experiences, and understandings of the White person. In addition, more than one schema may be centered or enacted at the same time. Examples of this are provided in the Chapter 4.

Figure 6

Helms' White Racial Identity Framework



Note. This visual presents the phases and schema of Helms' framework, as well as some key indicators of each schema.

In addition to her White racial identity framework, Helms' text provides information about the meaning of race in society. While I have read and engaged with these chapters, I decided to focus on the sections related to Helms' Model of White Identity Development, including the phases and schemas presented above. As a result, I included chapters 7 through 14 in my data generation and analysis process. These chapters discuss Helms' framework generally, detail each schema of

the framework, and discuss how to use the framework. The information in these chapters provided an overall structure as I considered my artifacts. While writing with Helms, I made connections with the artifacts and the discussions with my critical friend. I was able to see how my work and experiences fit into Helms' White racial identity framework. While my reflective writing with Helms was in response to specific prompts, I also journaled about my thinking around her chapters and examples she provided, as shown in the excerpt below Figure 7. This reflective writing was typed and was frequently formatted as sentences and paragraphs, as opposed to bullet points or sentence fragments.

Figure 7

Excerpt of reflective writing with Helms

I connected greatly with the Disintegration schema with its guilt (bad behavior), shame (personally flawed), confusion, and the lack of "socially approved guidelines for resolving one's internal turmoil" (p. 41). Realizing that the social construction of race has large and invasive impacts is a start, but the information and figuring out how to work with it/learn more/move towards more humanity, requires a shift of. . . everything really. Everything is impacted by whiteness and race, so changes in knowledge, thinking, and learning also impact everything. It is difficult to think through, but the work is so important, it is worth figuring out. This schema also lends itself to getting stuck because it is very overwhelming and confusing. This schema brings up many questions about morality, stated beliefs of equity that stand in contrast to actions that support systemic racism, how people evaluate and judge others, and how to correct injustice once a person is aware.

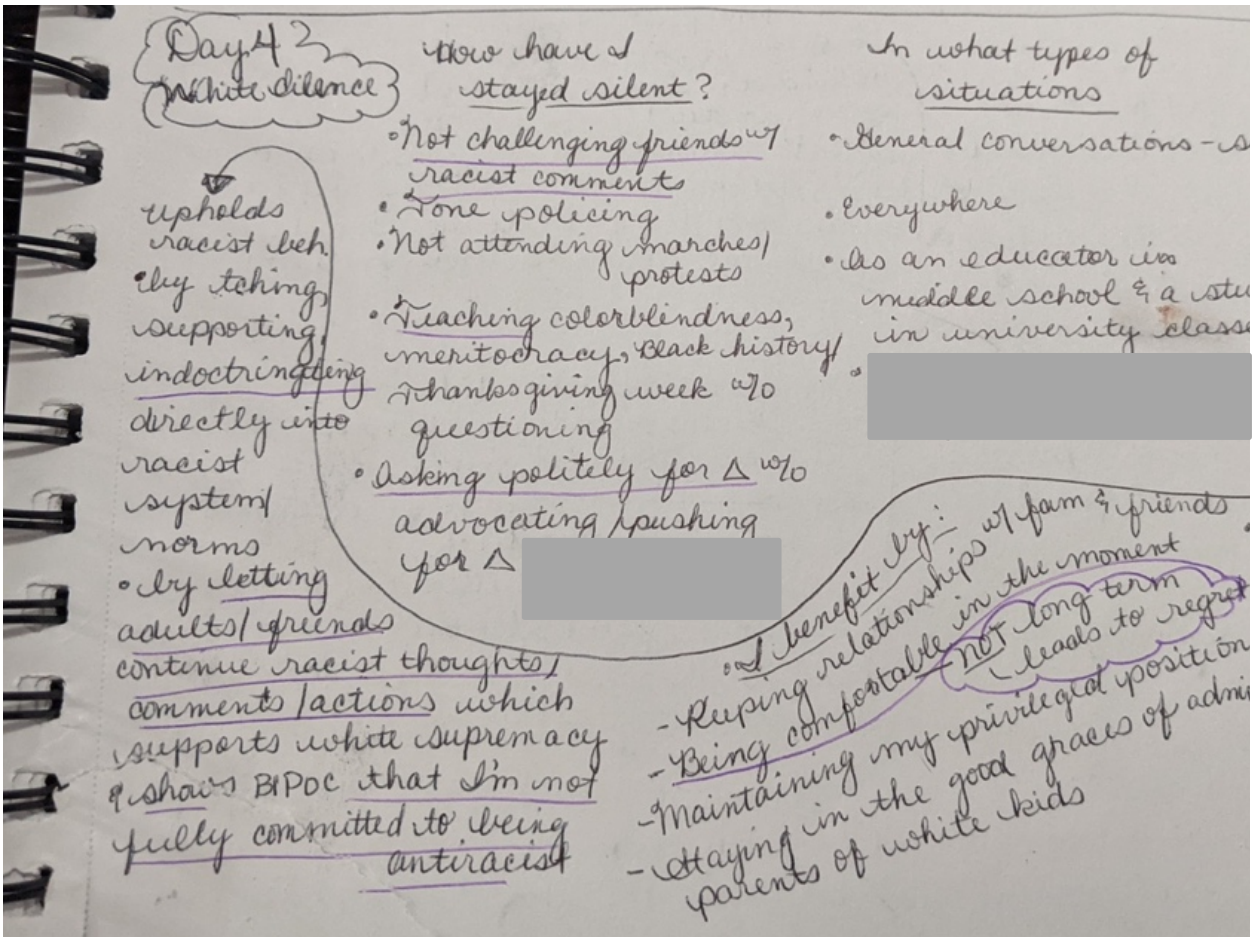
Saad (2020) offers a guided book for people who benefit from White supremacy, including White people and BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color). The book offers 28 days of writing prompts, along with social and historical context, stories, definitions, and additional resources. Because the focus of this research was on investigating Whiteness and racial identity, I

chose to focus my reflective writing on the 28 days of writing prompts during my data generation and analysis process. These prompts make up Part II of Saad's (2020) book. Part I provides information about how to use the book, which I considered prior to engaging in this research.

Saad's writing helped me think about how my specific thinking and actions fit into the larger systems of White supremacy. Her work provided terminology, definitions, and examples that resonated with aspects of my artifacts and discussion with my critical friend. As a result, I was able to consider my artifacts and discussion transcripts through a more critical lens, which enabled me to see more examples of the enactment of my White racial identity. Most of my writing with Saad's text was completed by hand and was generally formatted as bullet points or sketches, as shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8

Excerpt of reflective writing with Saad



Note. Due to the personal nature of this writing, I used two gray rectangles to redact sensitive information.

Engaging with the texts of both Helms and Saad enabled me to engage more deeply in my analysis. The information and insight they provided allowed me to see specific examples of whiteness in my work, to name these examples, and to situate my White racial identity in the framework.

Researcher Journal

Throughout this process, I utilized researcher journals to record reflective writings, specific notes about my research process, notes from meeting with my critical friend and committee members, and general thinking and observations. One journal was a spiral notebook, as shown in Figure 8. The other journal was an electronic document. An excerpt is provided in Figure 9. Each entry was dated, and I used these entries to maintain a detailed record of my research and analysis process and reflect on this research.

Figure 9

Excerpt of electronic researcher journal

Interestingly, it seems to be more true for my peers than for my students in this situation. I give my students lots of opportunities to be experts and share their experiences and learn from them, but I assume my peers do not know things and need to be told the most basic things. . .

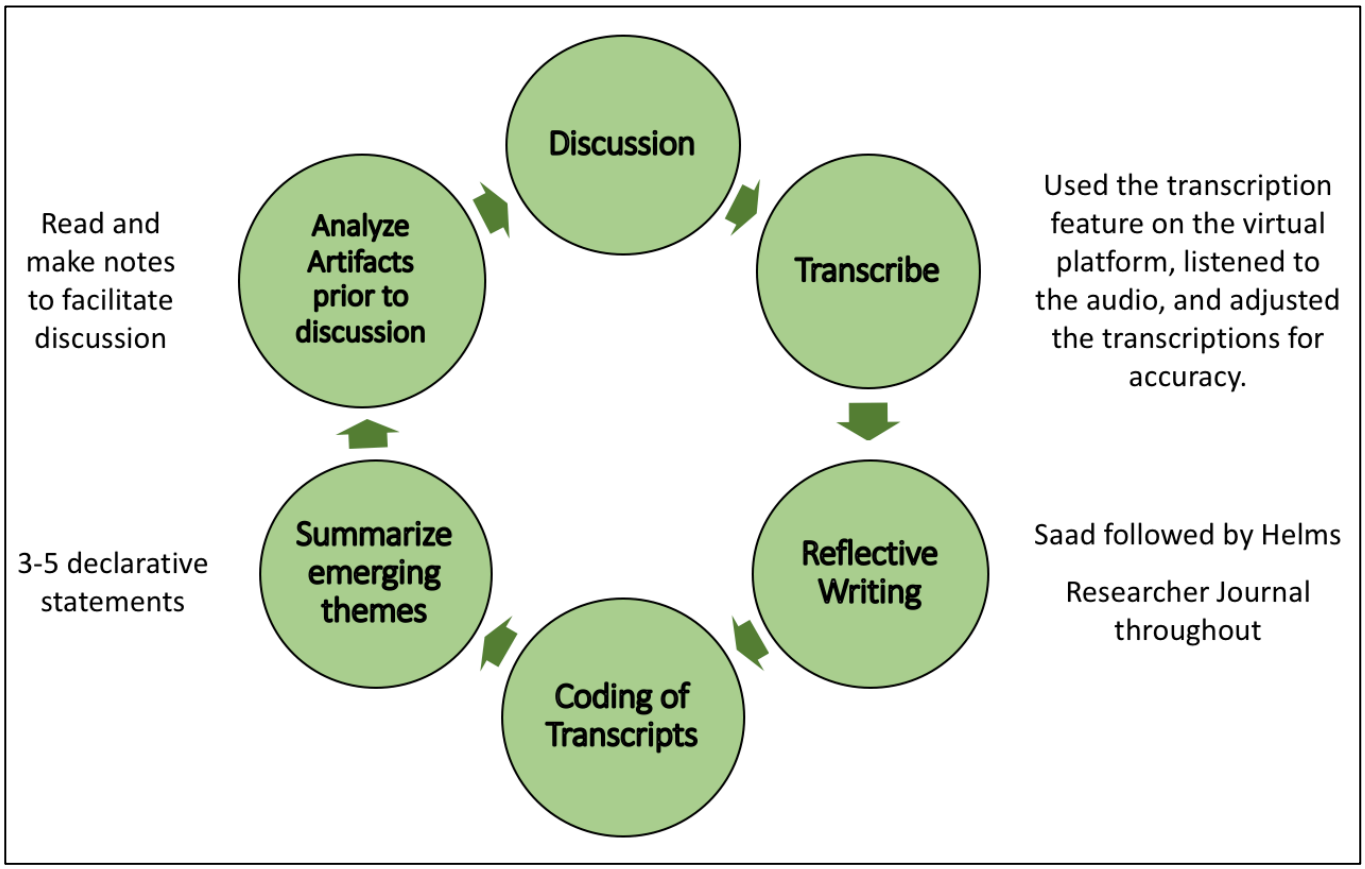
In regards to method – This second transcript was much more difficult for me to code and analyze. I think this conversation was more choppy, did not have a smooth flow of ideas, which led to different topics coming up in different areas. There were also a number of side stories and vignettes about school. While these were elicited through the use of the artifacts, they created a different flow and focus in some areas than came up in D1. I tried to code and analyze the data the same way. I coded the transcript as I had for D1. I created a matrix with the codes and printed it. Then I went through the matrix and looked for common codes. I came up with some

Data Analysis

For this research, I engaged in three data generation and analysis cycles. This process is presented below in Figure 10 and is detailed in the following sections.

Figure 10

Data generation and analysis cycle



Note. This cycle was completed three times, once for each teaching context

Each component of my data was crucial in my process, so I wanted to be sure I considered each of these sources throughout my research. In addition, I needed to ensure that the discussions with my critical friend happened regularly. I needed enough time to engage in my transcript analysis and reflective writing, but I did not want my critical friend to be too far removed from our conversation as I discussed my initial findings. As a result, I created a table to break down the data sources and timeline for my elicitation and analysis (Figure 11).

Figure 11

Research timeline

		Helms (2020)	Saad (2020)
January 17, 2021	Elicitation Discussion 1	Chapters 7 & 8	Week 1
January 31, 2021	Elicitation Discussions 2	Chapters 9 & 10	Week 2
February 15, 2021	Elicitation Discussion 3	Chapters 11 & 12	Week 3
February 28, 2021	Elicitation Discussion 4	Chapters 13 & 14	Week 4
March 15, 2021	Final Discussion regarding themes		

Note. The date provided in the left-hand column indicates the date of the discussion.

For each cycle, the general process was the same. However, there were some variances as I moved through the process each time. I begin by detailing my general process for the data generation and analysis cycles. Then I discuss each of the three cycles separately to detail some of the differences.

Generating Data: Analysis of Artifacts, Discussion, Transcription, Reflective Writing

The cycle started with generating data, which involved analyzing the artifacts, discussing the artifacts with my critical friend, cleaning the transcription, and engaging in reflective writing. Prior to starting my analysis, I sent the artifacts and questions to my critical friend for her to preview. Then I read over the artifacts, highlighting and writing notes about some of the things I noticed in regards to whiteness as I read. I used these notes to open the discussion about the artifacts.

Every two weeks my critical friend and I met virtually for between one and two hours to discuss the artifacts. The meetings were audio recorded, and the virtual platform offered transcription services, which I utilized. For the first week after the meeting with my critical friend, I read and wrote with the Saad (2020) text. Then I read and wrote with the Helms (2020) text. Initially I had planned to code these reflective writings following the same process I used for my transcripts. Once I started the process, I determined that this would not be the best choice. I was concerned that coding the reflective writing alongside the transcripts would skew the codes in a particular way. For example, when I analyzed data related to my first teaching site, and I read and wrote about Helms' schemas of Contact and Disintegration. These schemas involve a lack of knowledge about systemic racism, confusion about issues around race, and related negative feelings. Likewise, Saad's initial chapters cover topics including White supremacy, White fragility, and White exceptionalism. All of these focus on the negative thoughts, actions, and feelings around race, becoming aware of race, and being white. Because the reflective readings and writings focus on learning about systemic racism and the related negative White response, coding these writings with the transcript may have skewed the codes toward the negative. I found that, in engaging deeply with these texts, I included the information and thinking from them naturally as I coded. As I continued through my analysis process, I included pieces of these reflective writings in my coding and writing.

During this first week, I also adjusted the format of the transcription so it was easier to analyze. During the second week, I reviewed the reformatted transcript with the audio to add information about who was speaking and to correct errors. Then I began coding.

Coding

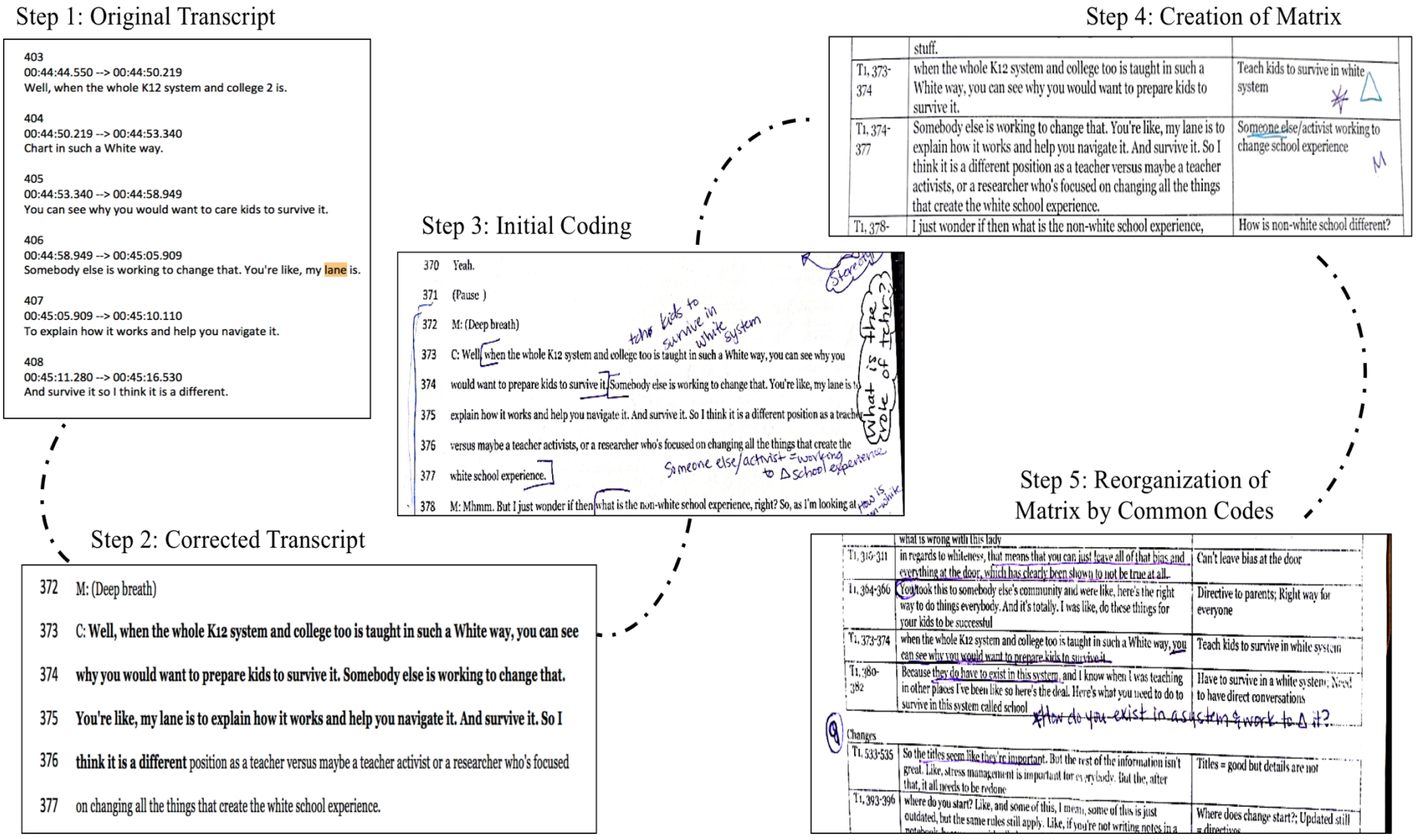
To start, I read over the transcript and marked data segments and thoughts by hand. Once I worked through the entire transcript, I transferred the data segments to a table in a word document.

The table had three columns. The first column contained the line numbers. The middle column contained the data segments, and I added my handwritten notes to the third column for brainstorming/emerging codes.

After all of the data segments were in the table, I read over the data segments looking for common messages or ideas and added these to the document. Then reworked the table, grouping data segments with similar ideas. As I moved through this process, I added notes, reconsidered where data segments fit, and determined that some data segments did not fit into any of the clear groups. These data segments went into their own table for a final consideration. Once the data segments were regrouped, I reviewed the data again. I looked for patterns and adjusted and added to the emerging codes. I made notes about what I saw within and between the groups. I also typed up my thinking about each group in my researcher journal. For each of these coding steps, I printed out the documents and made notes by hand.

Figure 12

Journey of a data segment



Note. These images show my coding process. The same data segment is shown in each image.

I used the tables and my notes to develop initial codes. I formatted these as three to five complete sentences, which I shared with my critical friend at the next discussion. My critical friend served as a form of member checking in this part of the process. I also met periodically with my dissertation committee and discussed emerging findings. My committee members provided another lens and additional considerations. These meetings led to several shifts in my thinking. For example, one conversation led to a change regarding what I considered a theme versus examples of themes, and another influenced how I grouped my findings. Conducting this form of member checking throughout the process and again at the end helped to ensure my research meets the criteria for trustworthiness and rigor. By following this process, I re-visited the data, considered the data in different groupings, and worked to a point of saturation. In the following sections, I share situations specific to each elicitation cycle.

The First Elicitation Cycle

As I was working through this first coding process, I found that I was doing more inferring than summarizing points in the transcript. Because I did not want to forget my thoughts, I recorded these inferences, ponderings, and implications for later consideration. Then I made sure I wrote codes for the sections as well. As I entered the data segments into my matrix, I read over the text again. I found a couple of places where I did not code text that seemed relevant during this additional reading. I added this text and related codes to the matrix. After I completed my matrix, I wrote through my comments and thoughts in my researcher journal. Engaging in both creating the matrix and writing enhanced the analysis by allowing me to consider the data in different ways.

The Second Elicitation Cycle

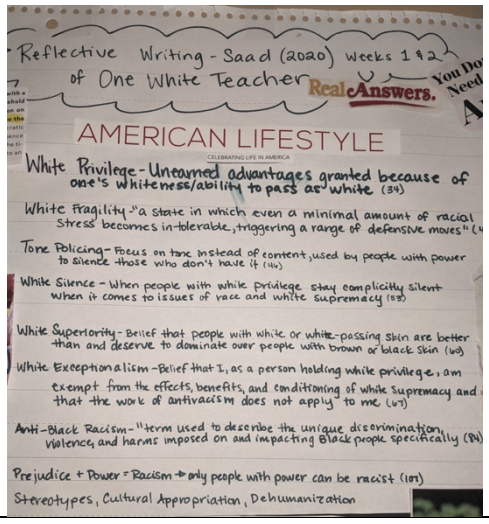
I started creating my second data matrix document where I grouped data segments with similar codes, and it felt like I was forcing the data into groups instead of letting it tell me the story. I believe that this was due to the conversation flowing less smoothly than the first discussion. In addition, this discussion contained a number of stories unrelated to the artifacts. I decided to start the coding process over. This time I started in the middle of the transcript and worked to the bottom. Then I started back in the middle and worked to the top. I started in the middle because that was where the conversation seemed to flow most smoothly. After I created my categories and reformatted the matrix, I had one very large category (52 data segments) and a number of small categories (2-4 data segments). I revisited these categories and refined my inclusion and exclusion criteria, leading to the creation of another set of categorized matrices. To account for the time it took to adjust the matrices and to ensure a thorough analysis of the data, I pushed the third discussion with my critical friend back two days.

And now for something completely different: Stuckness and Collage

In trying to do my reflective writing for Saad, I found myself focusing on more in general racism and racism in society and having a harder time focusing on myself as a person and as a teacher and I hit a wall with that where I just could not move pass that thinking and saying what I thought I was supposed to say instead of really taking a look at myself and my practices. So I decided to make a collage related to this work.

I started with a piece of poster paper from my time in the classroom. In the top center of the paper, I wrote down the words and definitions from Saad's book that I was struggling to process deeply.

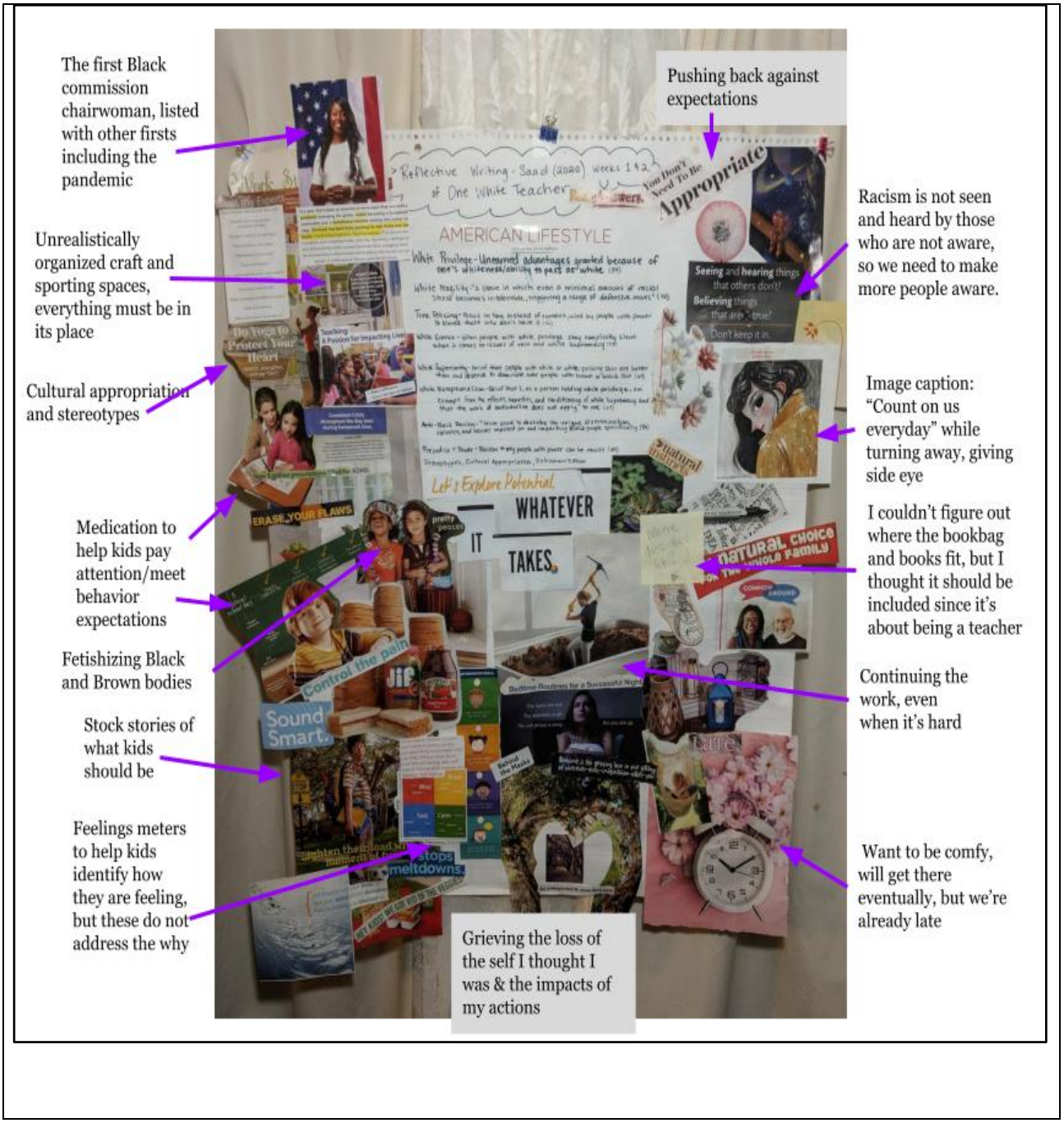
I cut out words and images from a variety of magazines while thinking about these words and definitions. After I finished cutting, I went through the stack and realized that a number of



their images and words really focused on racism and general. For example, I had cut out a picture of doctors who were in a practice together. They had different colors of skin, representing different races, and underneath it said that they were all medical doctors with the designation MD. So going along with some of the reading and thinking been doing, that image showed progress in that doctors of color and White doctors were in the same practice, and they all held the same credentials. However, that did not relate to me thinking about myself so I took out pictures that related to race and racism in general in order to focus on myself and my whiteness, particularly as a teacher.

I stepped back from my work and continued the process the next day. I spread everything out on a table: the poster that I wrote on, the magazine images and words, scissors, and glue. I removed a few more images and words that did not feel like they fit with my current focus. Similarly to the discussion above, these images and seemed to relate to more about general race in society and less about me as a researcher and teacher. Then I laid out and glued the remaining words and images. I have included two images of the final product. The first one is just the collage for the reader to consider. The second is the collage with some of my thoughts around it. Including both images opens the opportunity for the reader to engage with the work and also with me in conversation about the work, as it can be helpful to consider the impact and the intent of this type of work.


Reflective Writing - Saad (2020) Weeks 1 & 2
of One White Teacher
You Don't Need To Be
Appropriate
AMERICAN LIFESTYLE
White Privilege - Unearned advantages granted because of one's whiteness/ability to pass as white (34)
White Fragility - "a state in which even a minimal amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves" (40)
Tone Policing - Focus on tone instead of content, used by people with power to silence those who don't have it (44)
White Silence - When people with white privilege stay complicitly silent when it comes to issues of race and white supremacy (53)
White Superiority - Belief that people with white or white-passing skin are better than and deserve to dominate over people with brown or black skin (60)
White Exceptionalism - Belief that I, as a person holding white privilege, am exempt from the effects, benefits, and conditioning of white supremacy and that the work of antiracism does not apply to me (67)
Anti-Black Racism - "term used to describe the unique discrimination, violence, and harms imposed on and impacting Black people specifically (84)
Prejudice + Power = Racism → only people with power can be racist (107)
Stereotypes, Cultural Appropriation, Dehumanization
Seeing and hearing things that others don't?
Believing things that are not true?
Don't keep it in.
Do Yoga to Protect Your Heart
Stretch, strengthen, and say "Om"!
Teaching: A Passion for Impacting Lives
Consistent Cristy throughout the day, even during homework time.
Now 3 million prescriptions filled for ADHD.
natural instincts
Let's Explore Potential
WHATEVER IT TAKES.
Where does this fit?
ERASE YOUR FLAWS
pretty peaces
A typical school day
Starts CONCERTA
Control the pain
Sound Smart.
COMMON GROUND
Bedtime Routines for a Successful Night
The lights are out.
The television is off.
The cell phone is away.
But you are up.
Behind the Masks
Bedtime is for getting lost in the galaxy of wherever-their-imagination-takes-you.
Late.
Lighten their load with a moment of fun.
stops meltdowns.
Mad
Brave
Sad
Calm
HEY KIDS! WE GOT RID OF THE VEGGIES.
An unexpected & rewarding path



The Third Elicitation Cycle

Because I had refined my data generation and analysis during the first two cycles, the third elicitation and analysis cycle went smoothly. I noted similarities and differences between the three

contexts and noted these in my researcher journal as I completed the analysis of the third discussion.

Final Analysis

After completing the three elicitation cycles, I considered the findings from each context. While I anticipated the data would lead to thematic findings, this was not the case. As a result, I considered my data in relation to Helms' Racial Identity Framework. I created a new matrix using the schema names and a brief description as the column titles. Figure 13 shows an excerpt from this matrix. I revisited the matrices from the three discussions and placed data segments into the different columns based on the schema being centered. I color coded the data segments, so I could easily see which contexts were represented within each schema.

Figure 13

Data matrix with schemas from Helms' framework

Contact	Disintegration	Reintegration	Pseudo-Independence	Immersion-Emersion	Autonomy
Neutrality - Color-blind mentality; White perspective applicable to all people - Focus on assimilation; Ignorance - Interactions w/ members of other races = characterized by naivete or timidity – cultural appropriation; Innocence	Confusion: acknowledges whiteness, privileges, and possibility of losing them; Wants acceptance by white people but also to choose humanity; Shame (belief that White is flawed, unredeemable), Guilt (from behaving badly, focuses on White feelings)	Overt/Covert white superiority; Anger towards/stereotypes of BIPOC; Denial of white responsibility; denial of racism; Minimizing similarities b/t racial groups; Belief that Whites are no more racist than other groups; Blame BIPOC for their condition	White liberalist views; Wants to be seen as "good white"; Intellectualization – recognizes political implications of race/does not admit (denies/denial) responsibility of whites/self; Focuses on environmental factors (broken homes, stock stories) to explain differences in racial experiences and on making BIPOC more like whites to have success	Effort to understand unsanitized American history; Assumes personal responsibility for racism; Realistic awareness of +/- of being white; Looks for opportunities to actively confront racism; Recognizes the role of white people in racist systems instead of white savior; Rarely dominant b/c requires facing discomfort; Anger/ embarrassment	White person feels safe/secure in whiteness; Truly values diversity; Does not rely on BIPOC for validation of "nonracist" identity
– Colorblind – D3, 514 D3, 147-148 No race mentioned in case studies, focus on disability, not intersectionality; all children; D2, 260-263 Calling Black peer unprofessional while going behind her back for convo; – frustrated re: unprofessional while being unprofessional, no acknowledgement of race White perspective = applicable to all – "all students" T1, 93-95; Sessions to help all students T1, 270-272, T1, 276-277– student responsible for everything, tchrs always = fair Not having direct convo re: code switching / life outside school T1, 252-254 – "this is what we're teaching them is right" (Good quote) T1, 364-366 – presented same (White) info in different settings T1, 373-374 – Need to prepare kids	Guilt – D2, 127-130; D2, 130-132; D2, 132 - Not pushing for Black student into gifted, would have seen him differently if white Shame –D3, 193-195 – comfy classics, beware of white people, toxic tales Confusion: D2, 237-239 – Focus on white tchrs but Black tchrs have similar thoughts and actions; everyone is indoctrinated D3, 160-161 It's scary to put it (race) out there D2, 93-95 – needed change b/c not feeling fulfilled in homogeneous context D2, 262-264 – Talk to all parents as if don't know stuff, is this white? Wants acceptance:	– Covert white supremacy – D2, 520-522 – presenting w/o knowing the situation/learning/listening first D2, 145-147 - D2, 411-416; D2, 160-162 led training even though new; Knew what Black students needed – reassurance instead of toughness - (better than Black teachers did – matching Black students with Black teachers (135; 140) when I could do a better job (in my mind)); Reading level = professional, not friendly (know it all); Dismissive of Black peers' concerns about a kid and focused on my view of him instead D3, 638-639 – wording of presentation = unfriendly, authoritative D2, 374-375 - Assumptions = same for all parents, but in this	Intellectualizes – D3, 384-388 Look for quality, diverse books, discuss representation D3, 353-354 – include multicultural focus in lesson planning D3, 363-366 – model working together, tchr as facilitator/group member instead of authority D3, 397-400 – testing = one piece of the child D3, 404-405 – direct convo re: not judging students/families (not I-E b/c not calling out/specific to racism, talk in general about race, want to be seen as good white) D3, 555-557 – make sure visuals are inclusive D3, 616-619 focus on wording of beh report, be specific, w/o feeling statements/genearlizations Intellectualization – D2, 755-758 student survey D2, 488-489 reaching all students D2, 407-409 – Using buzz words w/o enacting D2, 391-395 – giving info = less	Actively confront racist views - D3, 378-384 Rdg. Skippy Jon Jones and discuss why not appropriate, facilitate further discussion D3, 49-53 – challenge white ideas of productivity – value peaceful, rested, processing, feeling accomplished w/o white ideals D3, 196-197 – Whiteness being revealed as a fallacy Look for opps to actively confront racism – D3, 443-446; 421-426 Homogenous schools, directly engage student teachers about conversations heard in room and current events, how we talk about students, deficit language. ~~Recognize putting race in case studies provides opportunity for discussion (currently but not in D3 artifacts)~~ D3, 447-450 – directly addressing harmful beh of white tchrs (deficit thinking/talking about specific groups and reframing)	

Note. Data segments are color coded to indicate discussion number. . is from discussion 1, .. is from discussion 2, and .. is from discussion 3.

I moved data segments that did not fit into any of the schemas but were related to White racial identity into a different matrix. I titled this matrix "Discussion". After I reviewed all of the discussion matrices, I grouped the data segments in this matrix by topics, which helped to structure the discussions section of this research paper. I have included an excerpt in Figure 14.

Figure 14

Excerpt from "Discussion" matrix

D3, 593-597 D3, 144-147 7 Discussion – need for direct convo	~~Memes are hard because there is a message that Black people are used in means because of their stereotypically animated and, like, dramatic and angry and intense reactions being used as comedy for white people.~~ Yep. I saw it as soon as I pulled up the slide. But, I mean, before somebody pointed that out to me, I didn't know that was an issue with memes at all. I did not. Somebody definitely pointed that out. And if you compare this meme, as the white teacher, she's highly educated, but also firm I think they knew and they were trying to say it, but, like they didn't say it. You know? They were like, you got to make sure all children are your philosophy. And they kept saying things like urban schools, and you're going to, it's going to be very different. You know, that it was kind of like this concealed like, they just wouldn't break it down and say here's all these things that influence children's schooling experiences and the white kids come out on top.	Black people = entertainment for white people; Didn't notice when making presentation but do now; Need to update
D3, 62-63 D3, 71-72 Discussion – considering intersectionality = important, but can also take focus from race	And I thought "Where's the line between messages in whiteness and messages in, like, feminism? Like, what, what bigger lens is it that's making you ask yourself? I think that, again, a very white characteristic is to try and put boundaries around these things like this is whiteness and this is feminism, and I think, I mean, it all has to go together. So, would you put a race on these? I think so, because I think not is not allowing an opportunity for an inner sexual, intersectional not inter sexual intersectional analysis I guess of the student, and we know	Line b/t whiteness and feminism? Including race opens conversations of race and intersectionality

Note. In this matrix, I used a system of crossing out text and highlighting to keep track of my process.

4 Findings

The purpose of this study was to consider how one White teacher's White racial identity changed over time and contexts. Helms' White racial identity framework served to guide and frame this study. The tables below summarize this framework.

Table 1

Phase 1 of Helms' framework

Helm's Phase 1: Internalization of Racism • Learning and internalizing rules of racism • Creating self-protective strategies that allow the White person to maintain the benefits of racism • Involves both self and social context • Exists within three schemas: Contact, Disintegration, and Reintegration.		
Contact	**Disintegration**	**Reintegration**
• Neutrality - Color-blind mentality; • White perspective applicable to all people - Focus on assimilation; • Ignorance - Interactions w/ members of other races = characterized by naivete or timidity – cultural appropriation; • Innocence	• Confusion; • Acknowledges whiteness, privileges, and possibility of losing them; • Wants acceptance by White people but also to choose humanity; • Shame (belief that White is flawed, unredeemable); • Guilt (from behaving badly, focuses on White feelings)	• Overt/Covert White superiority; • Anger towards/stereotypes of BIPOC; • Denial of White responsibility and racism; • Minimizing similarities b/t racial groups; • Belief that Whites are no more racist than other groups; • Blame BIPOC for their condition

Note. These tables serve to revisit the theoretical framework for this study prior to presenting findings.

Table 2

Phase 2 of Helms' framework

Helm's Phase 2: Non-racist Identity • Moving past the natural tendency of White people to maintain their privileged status by remaining oblivious or neutral towards issues of race. • Challenging White racial socialization norms in their classrooms and schools • Exists within three schemas: Pseudo-Independence, Immersion-Emersion, and Autonomy.		
Pseudo-Independence	**Immersion-Emersion**	**Autonomy**
• White liberalist views; • Wants to be seen as "good white"; • Intellectualization – recognizes political implications of race/does not admit (denies/denial) responsibility of whites/self; • Focuses on environmental factors (broken homes, stock stories) to explain differences in racial experiences and on making BIPOC more like whites to have success	• Effort to understand unsanitized American history; • Assumes personal responsibility for racism; • Realistic awareness of +/- of being white; • Looks for opportunities to actively confront racism; • Recognizes the role of White people in racist systems instead of White savior; • Rarely dominant b/c requires facing discomfort; • Anger/ embarrassment	• White person feels safe/secure in whiteness; • Truly values diversity; • Does not rely on BIPOC for validation of "nonracist" identity

Note. These tables serve to revisit the theoretical framework for this study prior to presenting findings.

Overall, the number and presentation of the schemas shifted as I moved through time and different contexts. I present these findings through the use of two visuals, a chronology and a web. The chronology presents specific schemas during my journey as a teacher, as well as specific transcript excerpts showing behaviors and thinking related to these schemas. The discussion of the chronology is written in first person. The web connects my specific journey to the larger picture of

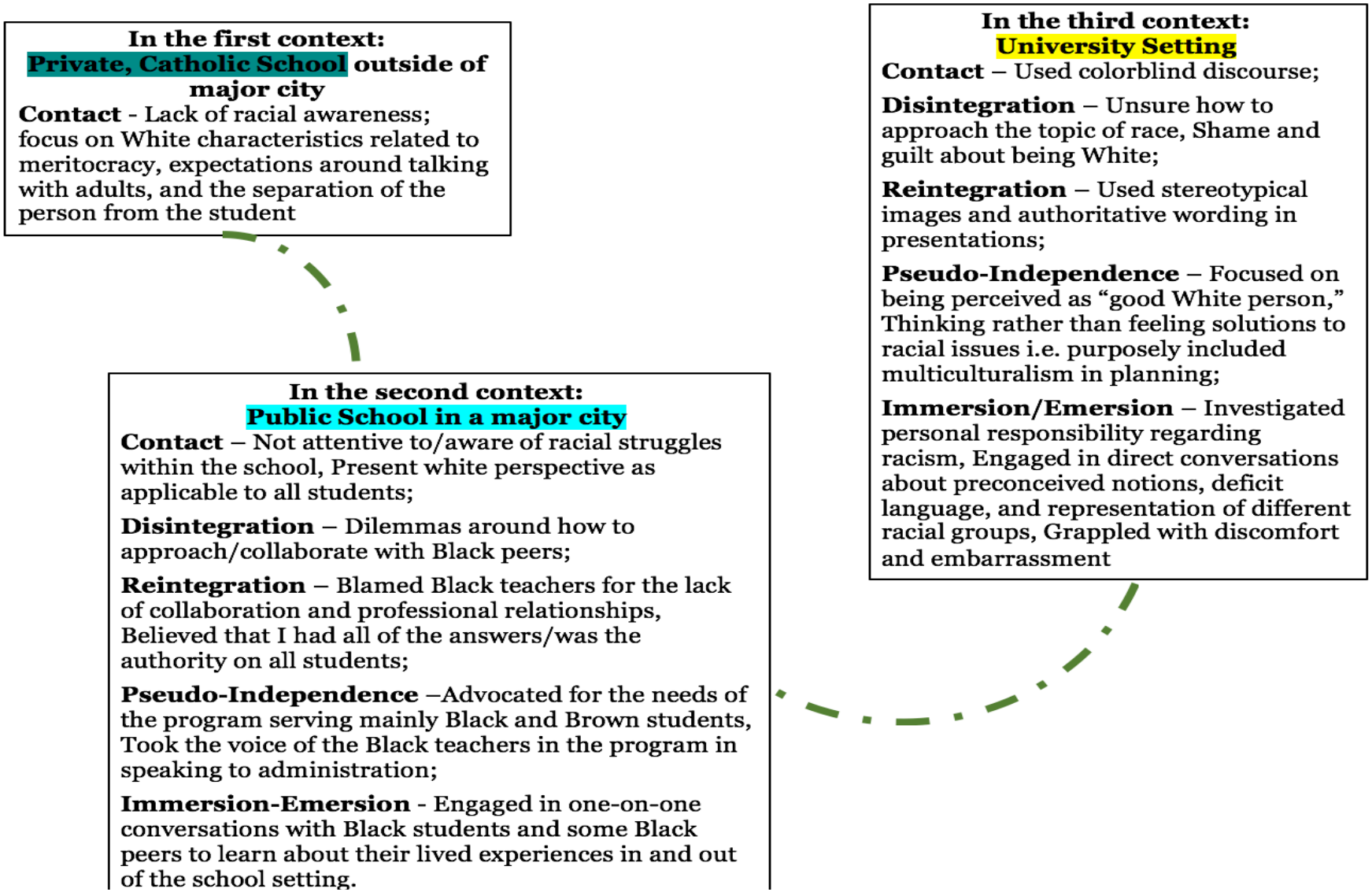
one White teacher. It shares how teacher thoughts and behaviors indicate schemas of Helms' White racial identity. This section is written in third person.

Chronology

The chronology represents my journey as a White teacher (Figure 15). The visual is comprised of three boxes, one for each teaching context, and a dotted line represents movement from one context to another. Each box contains a brief description of the context and a list of the schemas centered in the context. Specific thoughts and behaviors related to each schema in regards to each context are provided to show how I, as a White teacher, enacted each schema in different contexts.

Figure 15

Chronology of one White teacher s racial identity over time and cont



Note. This image presents my journey a the White teacher. The highlighting in this image matches the highlighting system from the data matrix in Figure 13 for consistency.

As I discuss this visual, I include specific examples and excerpts from my transcripts. These are meant to help the reader understand how I considered each schema. In addition, they may help the reader connect my work with aspects of their experience in teaching or with White racial identity.

First Context

Contact
• Neutrality • Ignorance • Innocence

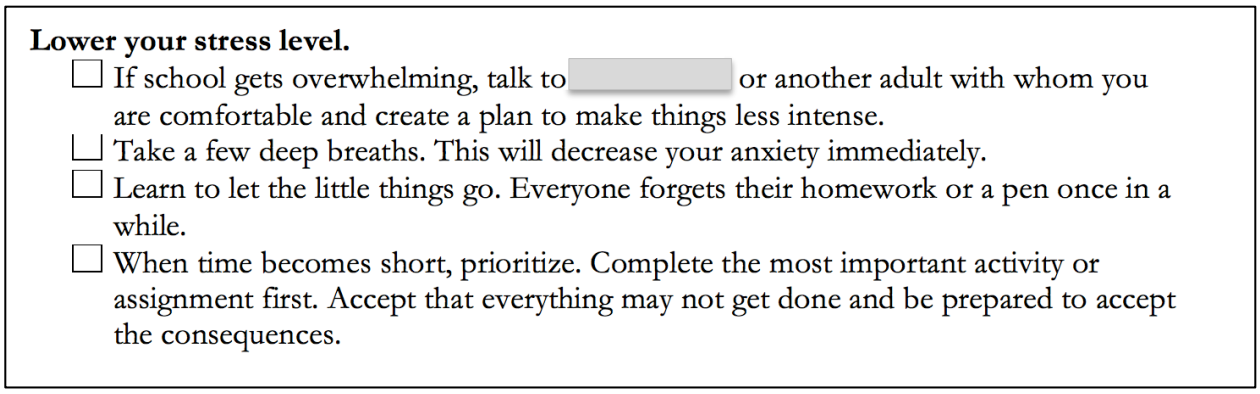
The first box in the chronology contains information from my time teaching at a private, Christian school about thirty minutes outside of a major city in the southeast. In this context, I worked as a support teacher for students in grades five through eight. I taught small group classes of four to ten students who were below grade level in Math and students who were identified as needing help with organization and study skills, and I went into classrooms to provide support to students in writing. In addition, I filled in as a substitute in full size classes of all subjects, directed traffic for afternoon carpool lines, and monitored lunch and recess for different grade levels.

In this time and context, I centered the Contact schema. Notably, I saw no other schemas in this time and context. This is likely the result of my growing up in a majority White situation that minimized my interactions with Black and Brown people. When I was growing up, I went to private, Christian schools, which limited my interactions with Black and Brown children and teachers. Additionally, my family lived in neighborhoods where the majority of our neighbors were white. Living in insulated, majority White settings has been shown to impact the White teacher's perceptions and actions in the classroom (i.e. hooks, 1994; Knight, 2004; Matias, 2013). For this reason, it is important to consider my upbringing in regards to my White racial identity in this teaching context.

I focused on academic and behavioral expectations for both teachers and students while working in this context. As the teacher, I was charged with providing information and ensuring students followed the rules. As a result, my artifacts from this time situated me, a White teacher, as an authority figure and "the children as students (and as robots)" (Researcher Journal). In this context, I focused solely on the roles of student and teacher. I did not consider social, spiritual, or physical aspects that make up the whole person. For example, Figure 16 shows an excerpt from a handout about stress management.

Figure 16

Excerpt from stress management handout



Lower your stress level.

- ☐ If school gets overwhelming, talk to [redacted] or another adult with whom you are comfortable and create a plan to make things less intense.
- ☐ Take a few deep breaths. This will decrease your anxiety immediately.
- ☐ Learn to let the little things go. Everyone forgets their homework or a pen once in a while.
- ☐ When time becomes short, prioritize. Complete the most important activity or assignment first. Accept that everything may not get done and be prepared to accept the consequences.

Note. from Artifacts for Elicitation 1, gray box added to redact name

> Concepts of success and stress only focus on school and related activities, such as studying and staying organized. Discussions of stress focus on getting work done and turned in on time but neglect larger issues of home life, growing up, becoming a teenager, being a member of a heterogeneous society and diverse society, and navigating the larger picture of life. The version of child as student addressed here matches the clean, emotionless, not complicated characteristics of being White (Helms, 2020), but it neglects the lived experiences of the students and how to help them become active and aware members of society. (Researcher Journal)

This focus on a sole aspect of the people in my school indicated that I was centering the Contact schema. As my critical friend and I discussed the artifacts, we noted that the only concerns addressed related to the school setting and the child as student. While there were many statements about completing assignments, studying, and staying organized at school, there was not a single mention of family, self-care, or societal stresses. When life outside of school is mentioned, it is placed within the context of school concerns. For example, suggesting that "if you're absent, you might also be able to do your work from home, and while you're absent study, call somebody, and go online." (Discussion 1). Even when a student is not at school, there was an assumption that school should be the focus.

Likewise, as a teacher in this time and context, I saw myself as an unbiased educator. I appeared to exist only in the context of school, coming "into school without baggage or preconceived notions, and, like, the teacher's just the teacher, in the school" (Discussion 1). One artifact includes an activity with role plays related to how a student could interact with a teacher.

> In the role plays, the teacher's responses are all reasonable and helpful. Like, this all. This puts everything on to the students. Like the teachers are, like, the teacher in the front of the room, like, teaching the class. They're just going to do what's fair (Discussion 1)

This quote demonstrates my perceived impartiality in this time and context.

The Contact schema also came up during the discussion in relation to instructional handouts created to help students be successful in school, a focus solely on the roles of student and teacher without seeing the whole person, and the teacher as an unbiased educator. Artifacts from this context included handouts about being a successful middle school student. In this handout I shared tips such as:

- Clean out your bookbag once a week.

- Use a format such an outline, columns, or bullet points to keep your notes neat and legible.
- Review notes, homework, worksheets, and previous tests to get an idea of the types of questions the teacher will ask.
- Combine activities by keeping study materials in the car or on the mirror in your bathroom.
- Learn to let the little things go. Everyone forgets their homework or pen once in a while.
- When talking with teachers,

  Keep your voice at a conversational level. Do not argue after the teacher has made a decision. Be prepared to accept what the teacher says. Even if the teacher does not agree with your points he, or she will still respect the fact that you initiated the conversation about your concerns. Be proud of yourself for being heard. Be proud of yourself for being heard. (Artifacts for Elicitation 1)

Each of these suggestions supports the idea of meritocracy, or the proposition that people experience success based on hard work and abilities without the influence of personal or physical characteristics (Merriam-Webster, 2021).

> This story of the American dream, that if, you know, you have to work hard, you have to do the study tips. If you're organized, if you're on time, if you ask for help and you do all these things, then you'll and lower your stress level. You will be successful. You'll survive middle school. (Discussion 1)

These messages are repeated in both the artifacts and the related discussion about my beliefs and actions when I was working in this context. Meritocracy is one idea that Whiteness reinforces and that may influence White racial identity.

Second Context

The second box in the chronology contains information from the second time and context, which was a public school in a major city. I had decided to leave the private school setting and move to a public school setting because I felt like I was not doing the "real work" of teaching. I had a Bachelor's degree in Special Education but was working in a setting without students identified as needing the support of a special education teacher. I had been prepared by my preservice teaching program to struggle as a teacher, to feel overwhelmed by the pressures of my job and motivated by successes with hard to reach students. I was not having this experience in my first teaching job. I thought public school was the answer.

After visiting the school and seeing its diversity[7], I believed that moving to a setting with a racially diverse student population where I could experience the struggles of teaching would make my job more fulfilling. In addition, I would be able to work with students identified as needing the support of the special education program. In some cases, I supported students in the general education setting as a co-teacher. I would go into another teacher's classroom for one class period in which students in the special education program were enrolled. I taught some students in small classes of 8 to 10 students as a resource teacher. These classes met in my classroom, which was separate from the general education setting. Generally, these students were in the resource setting for one or two academic classes and in the general education setting for the remainder of the day. I also

[7] Student Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity for the contexts under consideration (National Center for Education Statistics)

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Two+ Races
Private School (2017-2018)	85%	2%	12%	<1%	0%	0%	0%
Public School (2018-2019)	53%	30%	7%	3%	<1%	0%	6%

supported students who were in the self-contained setting. These students spent their entire academic day in a classroom that was separate from the general education setting. They received instruction in small group classes of 8 to 10 students. While teachers and other students receiving special education support would enter and leave the classroom to teach and attend classes, students being served in the self-contained setting did not have opportunities to interact with students in general education classes.

It is notable in this context that I was working within not only systems of white supremacy and racism but also ableist systems, which added layers of complexity to the situation. While I recognized that I worked with mainly Black and Brown children and that the majority of the children in the larger special education program were Black and Brown, I did not realize how the systems of race and ableism intersected. A deep discussion of this issue is outside of the scope of this paper, but it is a consideration in this context.

I learned much more about race and systems of race during my time in this second context. As a result, I enacted more schemas from Helms' White identity framework were apparent, specifically, Contact, Disintegration, Reintegration, Pseudo-Independence, and Immersion-Emersion.

Contact
• Neutrality • Ignorance • Innocence

In this context, the Contact schema appeared as ignorance of racial issues. The students in this public school setting were demographically diverse in terms of race and socioeconomic status.[8] When I entered the school, I expected to see overt racial discord between students, to have to intervene and help students engage in discussions about race and how we are all the same deep down. I did not experience these things, which I interpreted as the absence of racial tension. In reflecting on this time, I realize that I simply did not recognize the discord or engage in the conversations that were certainly happening around me. Instead I presented the White

[8] According to the National Center for Education Statistics: 53% White, 30% Black, 7% Hispanic, 3% Asian, <1% American Indian/Alaska Native, 6% Two or More Races; 27% Free and Reduced Lunch (2018-2019 school year)

perspective to all students with the expectation that students would assimilate as needed to meet these (White) expectations.

> Handouts included general tips like getting to tutorial and paying attention in class. These were presented to students, teachers, and parents as ways of helping all students be successful. The reality for many students was that they were unable to get to before and after school tutorials due to their use of the school bus and need for breakfast at school. The students who needed tutorial help were not always able to get it at the standard times. The handouts do not provide alternatives or mention what to do if a student could not follow these suggestions, indicating the presence of one view from the teacher (Researcher Journal)

I also centered the Disintegration schema in this context as I worked to figure out my place, as a White teacher, in this more diverse context. Specifically, I experienced dilemmas in how to approach and collaborate with Black peers. At the time, I did not realize the extent to which I struggled, but in conversation with my critical friend, I realized that I interacted differently with my White peers than I did with my Black peers, as seen in the excerpt below.

Disintegration
• Confusion • Shame • Guilt

> M: I had one Black co-teacher the whole time I was there, because most of the teachers were White and she just would not work with me. This was this class of 42, and I was really struggling with it. And I was like, why will she not just. I was like, let me, let's plan together. Let me help you grade? What part of your class can I teach, like Co-teaching models. And she was like, you don't have to come to my class and so I was talking to a para professional who I had become pretty good friends with who was also Black and I was like can you just like, I'm just really struggling with this class what am I missing? And she was like, well, you're white, so, anything you say is telling her she's less than.

C: Mhmm.

M: So my offers to help plan or to take over parts of the class were because she wasn't doing that well enough and I needed to do it. And my offers to help her grade were saying that she wasn't doing it fast enough or wasn't doing it right. And I was like, see, that's kind of important for me to know because these are just things I'm doing as a co-teacher. I'm doing my job.

. . .

C: So, do you think that if she was white, you would have gone to her instead?

M: I don't know cause I didn't have that conflict. The only time I had to have a conversation with one of my co-teachers where it was like, this thing that you're doing is not working for the kids was a teacher, I had already worked with for two years, so even though I knew it would be a hard conversation, I knew she'd get mad at me, we had already worked together for two years so I feel like that's a different situation. She was white, but I don't know. . . I mean, that probably. I'm sure that (race) came into play now that I'm thinking about it because I had another (White) teacher who found out that I was her co-teacher, and she was like also in science. And she was like, I'm really not excited to have you in my room this year, so, we'll just see how it goes, I guess, but I'm not expecting very much.

C: Why?

M: And I was like, noted. Did you want to tell me more about that? And we ended up being really good friends (Discussion 2)

This excerpt provides an example of my centering of the Contact schema because I

realize that I was not consciously aware of race when I was interacting with my Black and White co-teachers. The Reintegration schema is also visible in this excerpt. In the middle of this excerpt I discuss how I was simultaneously blaming my Black co-teacher for the lack of collaboration and professional relationship and being unprofessional by going to another adult to talk about her instead of addressing her directly. By blaming my Black co-teacher and not addressing her directly, I am indicating that I, as a White teacher, am superior. The message in my thoughts and actions is that I want to have a professional relationship, and the Black co-teacher is unwilling to work with me. This is an example of the how different schemas can be centered at the same time.

Reintegration
• White superiority • Anger • Denial

Contact
• Neutrality • Ignorance • Innocence

Another example of the Reintegration schema in this time and context involves the belief that I was the authority on all students, regardless of their skin color. I focused on my individual successes with Black students and interpreted these as my being more knowledgeable and aware than my teaching peers. I discuss a number of situations in which I am able to connect with Black and Brown students, which led me to believe I really understood the struggles of the Black child more than other teachers. For example,

> M: when I brought up my other student who he was, he was just brilliant in ways that were not school. Right like he took, one time, he took a test one time and he passed, and he'd never passed anything and I was like, I'm so sure that he cheated. Like I just was and I didn't call him on it. I was like, this is fine. So, the next test I sat in the back of the room, and I watched what he did, and he was looking on a sheet of the person next to him, So, I moved that person, not him because he would have thrown a fit. I just said, hey, can you come sit over here? Like, I just want to make sure that everybody's spread out. And so he had to go sharpen his pencil and look at my desk and see if there was anything on there since he was walking back, he had to

stop and get a tissue and he was looking at other people's paper, like he was so brilliant, like, these are all brilliant strategies, right?

C: Yeah.

M: And I was telling this story to somebody, and they were like, so did you write them up for cheating? And I was like, you're missing the point, this kid who struggles with things like this is. And amazing skills set. What can we channel this into? And they were like like, they had already written him off and it just. And I was, and they were just like, you just don't understand how the world looks for Black people or something? And I was like. It's true, I can't argue with that, but this kid. (Discussion 2)

At the time, I dismissed the other teachers' concerns that he needed the stated consequence for his actions. I focused on what I felt was my success in understanding the child without recognizing that my failure to hold him accountable may be detrimental as he moves outside of my classroom. I did not listen to their reasoning, and I still discount it in my assessment that "they had already written him off." I, as a White teacher, knew what was best.

Pseudo-Independence
• White liberal • "Good White" • Focus on environmental factors

During this time, I realized the need for change, but I was not considering my role in maintaining the systems, which is indicative of the Pseudo-Independence schema. I saw inequity in the amount and types of resources that were available to the teachers and students being served in the special education program. Although they received fewer resources, the students and teachers in the program were held to the same academic and behavioral standards as students outside the program. I recognized that changes needed to be made to help with issues of equity of instruction and resources, and I took steps to make these changes. For example, I advocated for the needs of the students and teachers in the special education program. I met with the special education team to discuss concerns, and then I

took these concerns to the principal and worked to find solutions. “I had the voice. I wanted to use that voice. It took voices away from people of color. It got us what we needed. Like, it got our kids what they needed” (Discussion 2). While this resulted in additional supplies for our program and our students,

> I realized how I, as the only White special education teacher, took the voice of my department in providing staff trainings and requesting, and getting, supplies for us and our students. I considered why this was the case. Did my White principal value my expertise or ask me because I am White or because my counterparts declined or because I presented myself according to White norms or for another reason? (Researcher Journal)

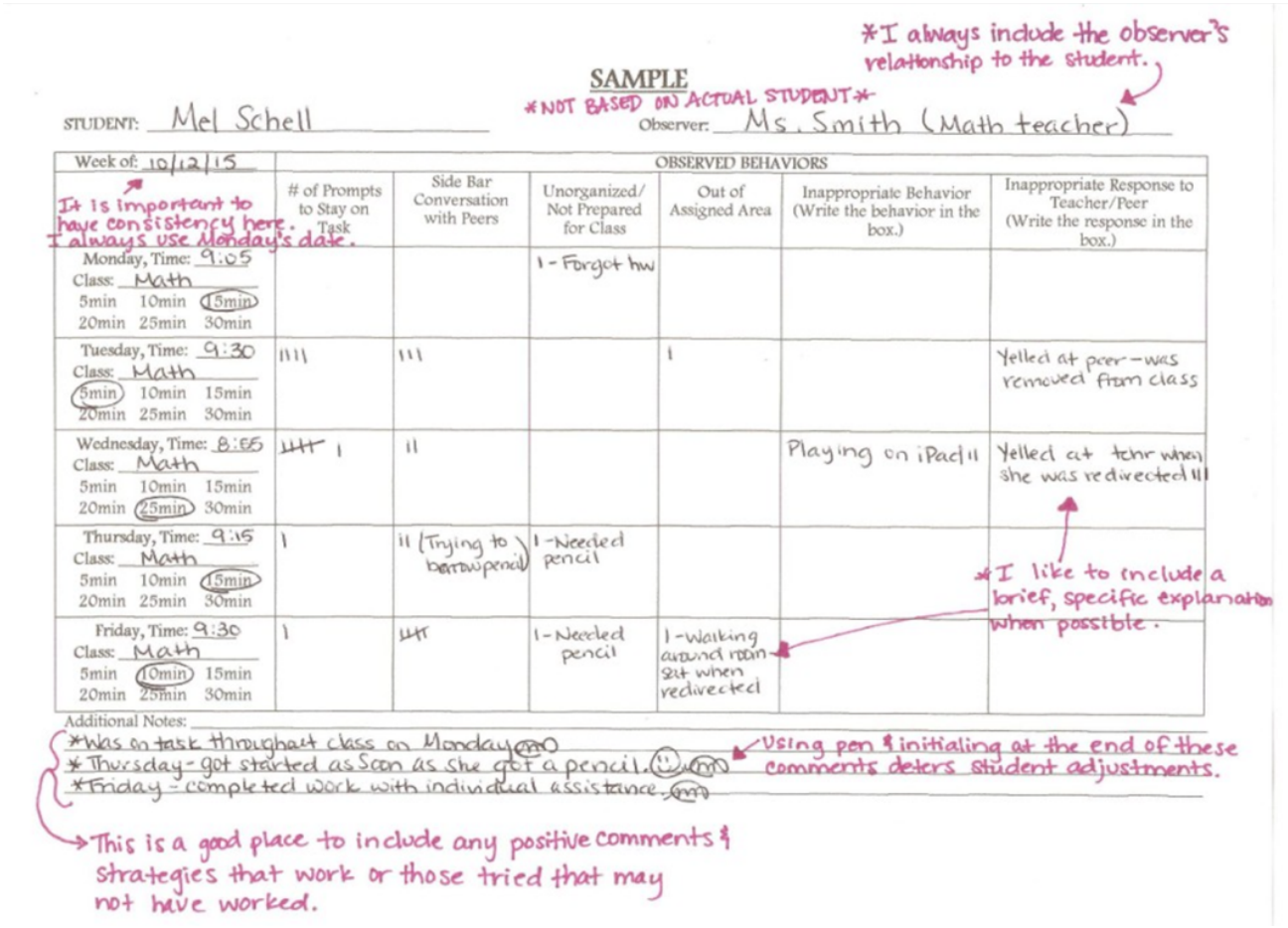
While I was attempting to resolve one form of inequity, I was simultaneously reinforcing systemic racism. I was performing my socially constructed role as a “good White” by advocating for the needs of my students and the special education program, which mainly served Black and Brown students. At the same time, I neglected to consider the disproportionality present in the special education system and continued to support inequitable policies. I did not question the larger educational system or the assimilation it encouraged. I continued to support systemic racism by helping the students in the special education program meet the requirements of a racist system instead of working to change the system.

While in this context, I did have times when I worked to understand the views and experiences of my Black and Brown students. During these times, I was centering the Immersion-Emersion schema. One example of this appears in a sample behavior tracking sheet I created (Figure 17).

Immersion-Emersion
• Personal responsibility • Realistic awareness • Actively confront racism

Figure 17

Sample behavior tracking sheet



Note. An example showing how the sheet can be used to include details and context around student behavior; This is not based on a real student or situation. I used a shorter version of my name for the student and the fictional "Ms. Smith" for the teacher.

As a special education teacher, I tracked student behavior when teachers expressed concerns. Many of the documents we used involved determining the frequency of certain behaviors using tally marks. In this artifact, I wanted to add context to behaviors teachers were expressing concerns about. I created this document with spaces to provide details about the situation and include positive student behaviors. Considering the reasons for the behavior provided an opportunity to

consider how expectations and assumptions contributed to the teachers' concerns and disciplinary outcomes and enabled us to have conversations with students about what they needed to be successful instead of focusing on negative behaviors. Working to understand the students' views is indicative of the Immersion-Emersion schema.

The Immersion-Emersion schema was also evident when I engaged in one-on-one conversations with my Black and Hispanic students in order to hear their stories. I considered how I, as a White teacher, could do a better job supporting their specific needs and made changes in my thinking and behavior because of that. In one example,

> I had another kid who, he was really a good kid, but he, like (laughs) he had such a mouth to talk back, and I, I just met with him one time. I was like, I need to stay after class and we were talking and I was like, what's the deal? Like, we were talking one on one. you're so, like, you're on it and you're just like, like, you get it, and then you're in class and you're like, I don't know how to add. Why are you asking me to do stuff and he said, you don't understand I have to go home with the people in the class, and I can't be this person, like, I can't be the teacher's pet and survive. And I said, okay, then you talk back to me in class to a certain point, and I'll give you this look. And when I give you that look, that means you need to stop. I don't want to give you a punishment. Like, I don't want you to take it to the point that you need to get a punishment for it, but I also know you have to exist in this space. So that was our agreement. So, he'd be like, and people would come into my room and be like, you're letting him talk to you like that. And I was like he's going to calm down, but I couldn't, right I wasn't going to be like, we have a plan here. You're messing with it, (Discussion 2)

In this example, I learned from my student that the way he behaved in school impacted his life outside of school. While I went into the conversation thinking he was upset with me, I realized that the issue was larger than that. Based on his story, I was able to adjust my thinking and actions to support what he needed to be successful in both settings. This situation, among others, also helped me look outside of myself at the larger picture of society and the experiences of my Black students while considering my role in the systems of race and normalizing whiteness.

As I learned about the lived experiences of my Black and Brown students, I realized how I contributed to and supported the larger systems of racism. Prior to having personal conversations with my Black and Brown students, my goal was to get the students I served in the special education program to fit into the general education setting. I wanted to help them meet expectations of the school such as sitting in class, completing all of the assignments as instructed, and engaging in silent class transitions. After learning from my students, I shifted my focus to meeting the needs of my students and supporting their growth by adjusting my actions and expectations. I continued to hold all of my students to rigorous academic standards, but I adjusted my classroom expectations to allow for more freedom of movement and student input. I adjusted assignments based on student needs and interests and supported other teachers in this endeavor. Instead of situating myself as the expert, I saw my students as the experts on their lives and needs. Allowing everyone to share the role of expert directly challenged the larger systems present in the educational setting. These moves were indicative of the Immersion-Emersion schema.

Third Context

The third box in the chronology presents information from my third teaching context, which was at a large university in a major city in the southeast. In this context, I taught a number of classes to preservice teachers on topics including meeting the needs of students identified as needing

special education services, literacy, and science. I was also in graduate school during this time. Engaging in classes and related coursework provided insight and information about race and racism, which impacted my White racial identity and teaching during this time. As a result, I enacted multiple schemas from Helms' White identity framework, specifically, Contact, Disintegration, Reintegration, Pseudo-Independence, and Immersion-Emersion. While the schemas were the same as the second context, in the university context, I enacted them differently.

Contact
• Neutrality • Ignorance • Innocence

In this context, the centering of the Contact schema was less prevalent than in the previous two contexts. The Contact schema appeared through my use of colorblind discourse in a variety of lessons. I discussed meeting the needs of all students and neglected direct conversations about race, specifically in relation to students identified as benefitting from special education support services. I included suggestions such as:

- Plan lessons ahead including questions to ask, possible questions students will ask, and multiple ways to present information.
- Ensure students understand the criteria for academic and behavioral success.
- Meet the students where they are.
- Check in with students about their understanding of the content and task expectations throughout the day. (Artifacts for Elicitation 3)

While these tips can be helpful for preservice teachers in regards to general teaching, I did not address aspects of race or personal bias, which have been shown to impact teaching. By leaving out these topics, I continued to center the Contact schema.

Disintegration
• Confusion • Shame • Guilt

Uncertainty about how to approach the topic of race, as well as shame and guilt associated with being white, influenced the topics I decided to teach. This reasoning demonstrates the centering of the Disintegration schema. While working

through my feelings associated with this schema, I struggled to process my ideas. I could not find words to express my thoughts and ideas. As a result, I created a number of collages. I used the process of making art because it is intuitive and non-linear (Butler-Kisber & Poldma, 2011). Art forms, such as collage, allowed me to create new understandings through the manipulation and movement of a variety of materials. This multisensory interaction with the research topic allowed me to consider my thinking in a new way (Gerstenblatt, 2013; Mannay, 2010). The collage process and product are helpful in accessing thoughts that I cannot express in words.

One collage in particular, Figure 18, addressed the feelings of uncertainty, shame, and guilt I felt about my whiteness and role in systemic racism.

Figure 18

Excerpt from writing retreat collage

Note. Artifacts for Elicitation 3. As discussed in the introduction, this collage contains images that are problematic, as they carry the connotations from their original creation (Hall, 2007). Although I have removed them from their original context, the messages are still present. For example, the image of the Black woman in the bottom middle of this collage reinforces the racial caricature of Mammy, which was frequently used during the Jim Crow era as proof that Black woman were contented with being enslaved (Pilgrim, 2000). My inclusion of this image served to trouble the stereotypical and racist representations of Black and Brown people. The image of the Black woman stands in contrast to the image of the photogenic White woman on the bottom left corner. Including

these images alongside the words about working hard is problematic because it indicates that both women can get ahead by working hard. However, many systemic societal forces are present that favor photogenic White woman and work against Black and Brown women. Decontextualizing the images of one Black woman and one White woman to stand in for all Black and White women disregards the diverse individuals that make up these groups. Connecting these images to hard work neglects the impacts of systemic societal forces.

In order to reflect on my collage more deeply, I considered the view of another person (Hall, 2007). I pondered the thoughts of my critical friend, as shown in the excerpt below.

> The biggest standout, that as a whole I think that it serves as a caution. With this, the yellow tape being like watch out, caution, seem like, be aware the toxic tales of White women. Beware the tale that hard work opens doors. Beware that this group of White people, the comfy classics, it's their state. And then there's the a little tiny picture of the Black woman whose presence is a miracle I'm assuming from surviving generations of suppression. And the whiteness in this is, I think, being revealed as a fallacy. It's challenging this stuff, the stories and labeling it as toxic and poisonous and home grown (Discussion 3)

Taken together, Figure 18 and the excerpt from Discussion 3 provide an example of what I call intent versus interpretation. Hall (2007) shares that, while the content and framing of images is intentional and serves to send a certain message, the consumer of the image may read it differently. Different interpretations during the processes of encoding and decoding can create misunderstandings between the creator of the images and the consumer. The example presented above provides a specific example of how my intent for including an image was interpreted differently by my critical friend. I included the image of the Black woman holding a pan of biscuits to trouble the stereotypical representation of Black women. However, my critical friend seemed to interpret this image, in conjunction with other aspects of the collage, as an indication of the resilience of Black people.

This interpretation may have resulted from my placement of the words "their presence today is akin to a miracle tale" overlapping the image of the Black woman. While I can see the impact of the image choice and placement after talking with my critical friend, I did not consider this interpretation as I created the collage. As stated before, this collage was intended to support my thinking around race, not as a piece to share with others or to send a message to other people. However, it is important for me to consider the messages conveyed by decontextualized images as I share my collages with other people and continue to use them in my work.

Both the collage and discussion excerpt express my struggle with being a White teacher. The collage shares a clear message of caution with the image of the poison bottle, the yellow caution tape, and the words "toxic tales." The caution is directed at White people and the idea that working hard opens doors. As a White woman, this collage tells me to be cautious of myself and my beliefs, especially in regards to teaching and how I see Black and Brown people. During the creation and analysis of the collage, I questioned my thoughts, actions, and core beliefs. I wondered what of my ways and being was whiteness and what just was. Could anything about me just be since I am a White woman living in whiteness? These questions, wonderings, and discomfort fill this collage and the related conversation with my critical friend, clearly indicating the Disintegration schema. This discomfort influenced how I enacted the other schemas during this time.

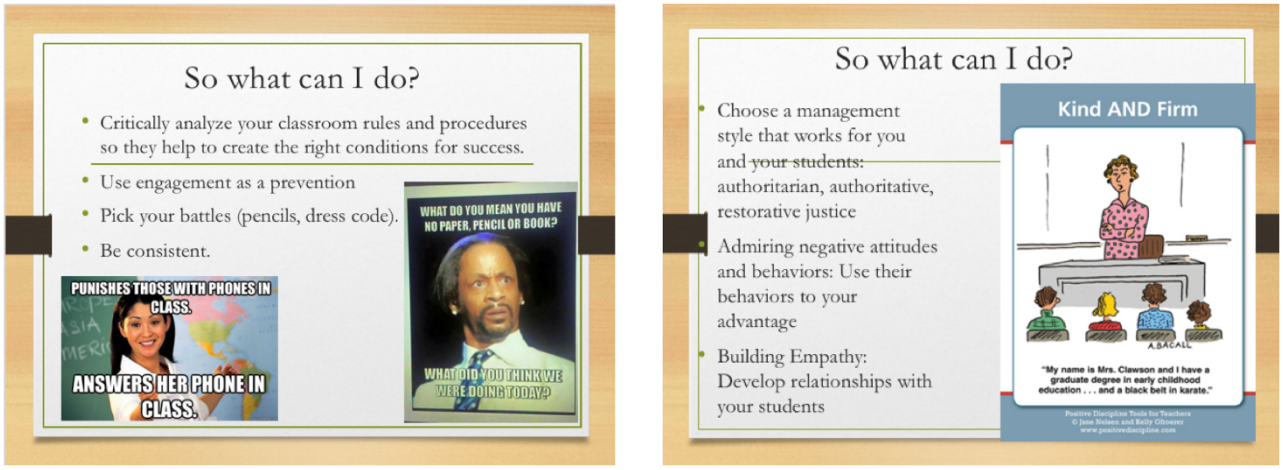
I centered the Reintegration schema as I used stereotypical images of people and authoritative wording in a presentation. In the university context, I presented a lesson titled Management of Students with Special Needs in the General Education Classroom. The title conveys the message that students identified as having special needs must be managed if they are to be outside of a classroom specifically for students with special needs. By presenting this, I am indicating that I have the knowledge and skills to teach preservice teachers how to manage/control students, as if I have all of the answers. Within the presentation, I include a

Reintegration
• White superiority • Anger • Denial

meme with an image of a Black man with a look of shock that is supposed to be comical (Figure 19). Using the image of a Black man because of his exaggerated expression supports the idea that Black people are entertainment for White people. I also included an image of a lady with brown skin whose caption indicates she is a hypocrite in regards to using phones in class. While she tells her students not to use their phones, she uses her phone in class. The lady is smiling and pointing at a map. These images stand in contrast to the image of the professional, educated White female presented on the following slide. The White woman's image has the caption "Kind and Firm".

Figure 19

Excerpt from Managing Student Behavior PowerPoint presentation



Note. These images show the difference in the representation of racial groups in a presentation created for pre-service teachers.

By including these types of images and wording, I am centering the Reintegration schema, in which I express ideas of White superiority. While there are many images I could have chosen for these slides, I selected images that present the White teacher as a competent professional, which situates her as superior to the Black and Brown teachers, who I presented as comical and incompetent.

I also centered the Pseudo-Independence schema in this time and context. I focused on being perceived as a "good White person" and engaged in thinking about solutions instead of considering my role in whiteness and addressing the larger issues. One example of thinking about a solution instead of feeling a solution involves incorporating lessons and activities related to multiculturalism in my class. I read aloud to the preservice teachers I was teaching, and I was purposeful in choosing books that focused on different aspects of culture. I included an assignment where students created a set of picture books that showed diversity within a larger social structure. For example, if the student chose to focus on families, they could consider groups such as adopted children, single parents, LGBTQ parents, or grandparents as primary caregivers. We discussed the importance of finding books that are written from the insider perspective and that did not include stereotypes or deficit perspectives. Considering these aspects ensured that the books included in their sets would provide an opportunity for students to see themselves reflected in books and to learn about various groups through more realistic representations. Incorporating these types of lessons and activities supported my students' learning about multiculturalism in some ways. However, focusing on picture books and classroom libraries enabled me to consider environmental factors without directly addressing race and racism.

Pseudo-Independence
• White liberal • "Good White" • Focus on environmental factors

There were times in this context where I did engage in direct conversations about race and grappled with my own discomfort and embarrassment about my role in racism and supporting racist systems. In these times, I was centering the Immersion-Emersion schema. During a read aloud in one of my classes, the main character travels to the desert in Mexico and eats rice and beans, which the book presents as typical behavior of Mexican people. This storyline perpetuates a negative and harmful stereotype that I needed to address with my students.

Immersion-Emersion
• Personal responsibility • Realistic awareness • Actively confront racism

> And some people in the class were like she's reading, like this is not okay. Like, you could see and then one student, even at the end of our whole discussion was, like, I mean, kids like colors and rhyming words, so I don't see anything that's wrong with it. And it's teaching them about another culture. And I was like, but do you see that it's teaching them stereotypes about another culture. . . So having those conversations was really important, because some people were like, oh, I didn't think about it that way before. (Discussion 3).

While a number of my students seemed surprised by the book I chose for this particular read aloud due to its stereotypical portrayal of Mexican people, using this book opened a discussion about how picture books represent different groups. My class was able to have a direct conversation about race and stereotypes as a result.[9] Although I was able to engage my students in discussions a means of recognizing and challenging racism, I continued to face my discomfort and embarrassment as I struggled with my personal responsibility in the role of the White teacher. The continued confusion and shame I felt around being a White teacher, indicated that I was centering the Disintegration schema in addition to the Immersion-Emersion schema. One example of this struggle was apparent in the quote below in which I discussed my thoughts during the second analysis cycle. I struggled as I realized the way I presented myself in comparison to the way I presented my Black co-teachers and as I wondered about how critical to be in regards to calling out my whiteness.

> I feel like in this process it is better to be a little bit really critical of myself, to be mindful then to just be like, oh, it's okay. It wasn't that bad or it, but, like, I really am feeling the. When I was writing about the last discussion and how I was not presenting all the pieces of everyone, like, I wasn't presenting the negative parts of what I did there and stuff like that or

[9] I recognize that "Mexican" is not a race. As a result of reading this book, we were able to discuss stereotypes and differences, race being among them.

> the positive parts of what my black co-teachers did. Um, the other special education teachers. I was like, like, it feels like searching for whiteness in some of these things are, it feels like being a little bit overly harsh, but I'm like, that might just be what it feels like, because it's not something that I do all the time (Discussion 3)

In addition to the words in the excerpt, my speech was halting, and I repeated the word "like" as a thinking or filler word, which is a sign of uncertainty and discomfort. During the analysis process, I wondered if I was looking too hard for examples of my white racial identity, assigning meaning to thoughts and actions that did not represent my undefined understanding of whiteness and white racial identity. I pondered the characteristics of whiteness and how these looked in comparison to my undefined understanding of normal. As I worked to understand and define terms such as whiteness and normal, I realized that my understanding of normal is situated in, and frequently comparable to, what I was learning about as whiteness. While this made sense, given that I am a White woman, I struggled to make these connections due to the invasive and ubiquitous nature of whiteness.

Another example of my struggle with shame and guilt appeared in the collage below, Figure 20, which I created during this time, while focusing on my role as a White teacher. This collage represented my effort to understand the unsensitized version of American history and my role as a White teacher in the current educational system. My critical friend and I discussed the individual images in this collage, and she shares her impressions in the excerpt provided directly after Figure 20.

Disintegration
• Confusion • Shame • Guilt

Figure 20
Excerpt from writing retreat collage

Note. Artifacts for Elicitation 3, As discussed in the Introduction, this collage contains images that are problematic. For example, the image of the Black woman in the top middle of this image reinforces the idea that Black woman should be happy and calm, even when discussing issues of race. The speech balloons contain words from an interview with a Black woman, but I copied the words from the article and put them into the mouth of the Black woman in the image. My actions here are problematic. Because this piece was created as part of my thinking, I must consider what thoughts and ideas my actions convey . This is just one of the examples in this collage.

> Both of those, the little White girl, and the little Black boy with the teacher in the middle. Their ears are covered by the Black paper, maybe, but it's also the teacher in the middle is saying messages of culturally relevant, culturally responsive classroom. But the Black boy was saying: the game is rigged, but the White girl was saying: forever is just beginning, but they're both getting the same message. And the mother is asking the school to talk about race. And the little, this was so powerful, I think? That, the little White boy with the stop sign on the side. Like. I don't know, I just pictured adult, like, White men as the enemy, and the stoppers to any kind of Black mothers' requests but that it's trained in them from somewhere, starting when they're young. So here's a little White boy who's going to grow up to place stop signs on the little Black boy in front of him. And then I think that the little White girl's experience in school is like, very hopeful, and this is the beginning and so pretty and green. It's like un-tainted. Just be green, be, be ignorant, I guess, is the one and it's up flowers and happy. And then the little Black boy's schooling is I was born a slave and there's death and there's the broken chair and the. It's like the, a visual of spirit murdering that (name) talks about (Discussion 3).

The image and related discussion demonstrate the feelings I had around being aware of my role in systemic racism as a White teacher. In the following paragraphs, I will share my thoughts on some aspects of the image, as well as my critical friend's impressions.

In regards to the image of the collage, I thought and struggled with many pieces, such as my choice of words and images and their placement in the collage. Due to space and time considerations, I chose a few examples to discuss in this paper.

One consideration in analyzing the collage was my decision to include certain words and images. For example, while I found many images of students, I chose to include an image in which

the students were wearing blinders. The blinders indicate the complete focus on school without considering outside influences, such as systemic racism and personal experiences outside of school, as I considered the role of the students. Another example involves the words I chose to use for the teacher's speech bubbles, including "Building globally engaged and culturally responsive classrooms" and "There's a place for you." Considering the teacher's words in relation to the visual of each student's experience shows my struggle between my perception of my role as a teacher and my perceptions of the experiences and real life results of the education I provided. While the impact on students of different races is shared in this image, the students pictured in my image show my narrow racial focus, as all students pictured are either Black or White. Also, the experiences of the students portrayed in my image show general outcomes, which neglect the differing experiences of individual students.

My placement of the words and images was another consideration. For example, placing the White teacher in the middle shows my belief during this time period that the teacher was the central and influential in the experiences of the students. The Black woman is positioned as a voice in the teacher's head, indicating my new understandings of the lived experiences of Black and Brown people. The words the Black woman says are quotes from a Black woman. For this collage, I removed these words from their context and put them into this Black woman's mouth. My actions here are problematic in that I am choosing which aspects of the original message are most important and placing them as if they are the main or sole concern of Black people regarding race in education. The words state that teachers need to discuss race directly and value differences, which oversimplifies the issue, suggesting that I see a simple solution to issues of race. In reality, I wonder about how complicating issues of race make it overwhelming and easier to ignore or dismiss, but this is not addressed in my choices with the image of the Black woman.

Some of these considerations were addressed in the discussion, as seen in excerpt presented above. However, as I revisited the audio and transcripts of this conversation, I realized that my critical friend and I focused on the individual images and words without making larger connections between these images or to the larger issues of systemic racism and educational inequity. With the support of my texts as critical friends, I considered the collage and discussion in larger educational and social contexts in order to make these connections. For example, I thought about the contradiction between the teacher's words, her actions, and the student outcomes. While the teacher in the collage states that everyone has a place in her classroom, the educational system is not designed to support this idea. For example, teacher preparation programs frequently focus on content and general teaching expectations without directly addressing race (Sleeter, 2001). Because of these systems, among others, teachers implement explicit, implicit, and hidden curriculum that maintains racial inequity, leading to differing, and often dichotomous outcomes for students based on their race.

These examples provide insight into the struggle involved in my analysis. As indicated above, Figure 20 provided many opportunities for me to consider my role as a teacher and the ways I impacted students, families, and the larger structures of education and race. The confusion, guilt, questioning, and struggles I experienced during this analysis were indicative of the Disintegration schema.

And Now for Something Completely Different: Staying Present

The findings section of this study focus on my work with my critical friend and the text of Helms. But what about Saad?

Saad's work was critical in my understanding of what it means to be White and to hold White privilege. It helped me interrogate my thoughts and actions related to topics such as Tone Policing, White Silence, Anti-Blackness, Cultural Appropriation, White Apathy, and so much more. Engaging in this work was the toughest part of conducting this study because

Saad's questions were direct and forced me to consider my true, current self. While considering my past assignments and teaching was eye-opening, I was able to distance myself from it to some degree. I could convince myself on some level that those artifacts represented my past self, that I was different now.

Saad reminded me that that was false. I am still a White teacher enacting my White identity in unfortunate ways every day. She kept me focused on my continuing role in the systems of racism and helped me see that, while I have changed in many ways, the path is continuous, a journey without a destination. Without understanding where I am, seeing how I continue to enact racist views and support the systems of racism, I cannot change.

While I appreciate the realizations she gave me, I struggled with them as well.

I am still struggling with them.

For this study, Saad's work introduced an additional struggle. I found myself in a constant struggle to figure out what my artifacts were saying and separate that from my current thoughts and ideas. In discussions, I found myself talking about how I could adjust artifacts to meet my current understandings of race and whiteness instead of listening to what the artifacts were telling me about my identity when I created them.

For this reason, I could not find a way to put them into the main body of the paper. Including definitions and explanations would not be adequate for the depth of her work, but my reflective writing from her prompts relates to my identity at the present, not from my time as a teacher. The lessons I learned from Saad run throughout this paper but are somehow too deep for direct citation.

Considering my own journey as a White teacher was necessary in order for me to consider the larger picture of the White teacher. While considering the chronology of my journey, I needed to find a way to consider this information as one White teacher.

The Web

As I engaged in my study and writing, I struggled to connect my journey to the larger educational system. I wanted to make sure that my self-study was relevant to more than just my endeavors as a teacher. With this in mind, I created The Web to connect my journey to that of the larger picture of one White teacher. The terms one White teacher and the White teacher represent a my attempt to shift the focus from my personal journey and actions to the larger context of education and the White teachers who continue to make up the majority of the teaching force.

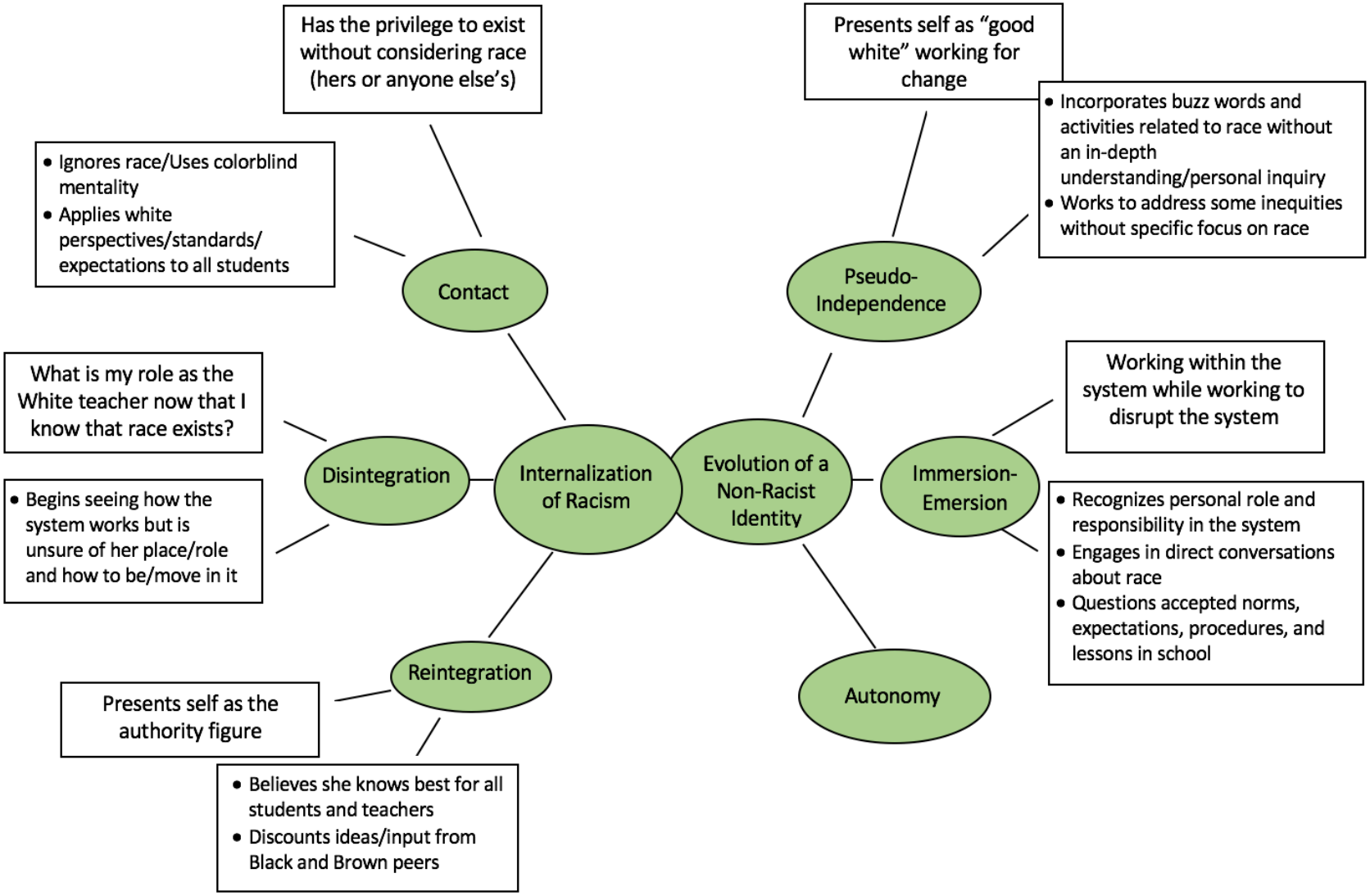
To create the web, I looked through the data segments related to each schema and wrote a theme in the form of a general statement for each schema. I added these to a visual of a web I created earlier (Figure 21) to show Helms' White racial identity framework. I expanded the web to include a theme and a couple of summary points for each schema. In the following sections, I detail the different schemas in relation to one White teacher. This section is written in third person to symbolize my stepping back from my personal journey.

The Web is indicative of the messiness of White racial identity. It is also notable that the schemas are fluid and can overlap. The White teacher may center one schema while still expressing aspects of others. For example, if the White teacher is centering the Disintegration schema because she is focused on gaining acceptance of other White people, she may be engaging in colorblind discourse (Contact schema) or engaging in the practice of challenging racism (Immersion-Emersion) as she thinks about how she could handle a situation related to race.

As I discuss each schema, I use words like may, could, seems. This wording is purposeful to signify that the schemas are not a list of set behaviors or actions in which White teachers engage when centering a specific schema. Rather, schemas signify ways of thinking and being that come across in different ways. As a result, White teachers may engage in different actions while centering the same schema. The examples presented in this research are intended to serve only as examples.

Figure 21

Visual of Helms' White racial identity framework



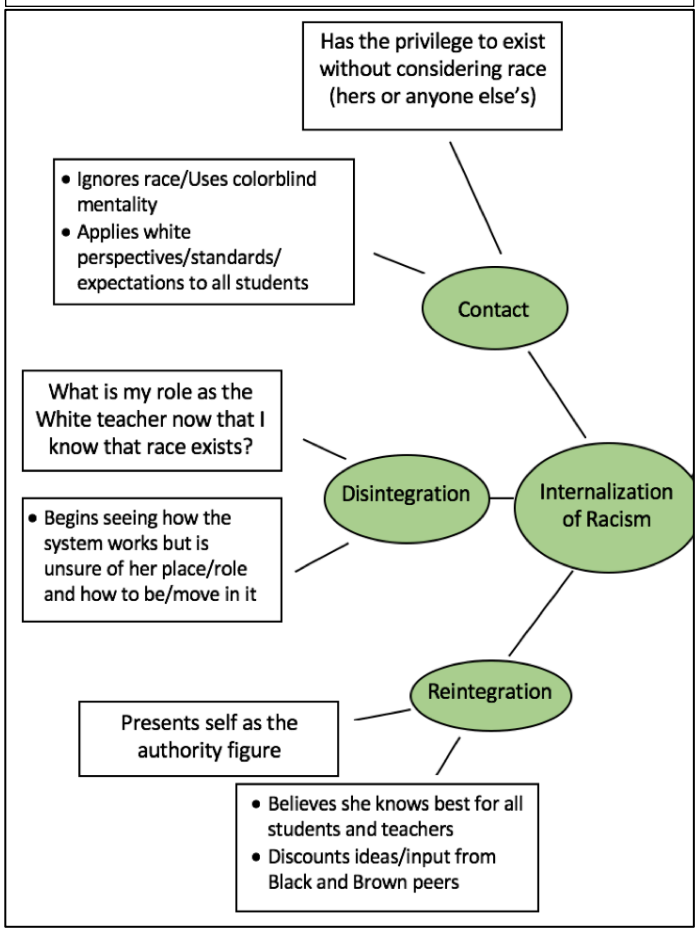
Note. The phases and schemas of Helms' White racial identity framework with summary points from the data

Helms' (2020) framework consists of two phases, and each phase includes three schemas. Helms asserts that all schema are always present, and multiple schemas may be centered during a single situation. In the following sections, each of the phases and schemas are discussed in regards to how they may appear for one White teacher. For each schema, the theme is described, and supporting examples are provided.

Phase 1: Internalization of Racism – Contact, Disintegration, Reintegration

Internalization of Racism involves learning and accepting the rules of racism. The White teacher creates self-protective strategies as a means of maintaining the benefits of racism. Helms describes three schemas in which this internalization of racism occurs.

Figure 22
First Phase: Internalization of Racism



Contact

In the Contact schema, the White teacher centered a state of ignorance, innocence, or neutrality in regards to race and related issues. For the White teacher, the Contact schema may appear as the privilege to exist without considering race or through the use of colorblind mentality. Examples of this schema were found in all three teaching times and contexts, with the majority of them coming from the first time and context.

The main finding for this schema was that the White teacher has the privilege

to exist without considering race, hers or anyone else's. This privilege may come across by applying White perspectives to all students and through the use of colorblind mentality. The White teacher may see school expectations as a normal, necessary way for students to act for success in school. However, these expectations are based on White racial norms. “Just telling them exactly what to say. And the body language. Just sitting up straight is totally white. Keeping your head up is totally white” (Discussion 1). By working to ensure that all students are following these expectations, the White teacher applies White perspectives to all students. Enforcing the traditional expectations encourages assimilation as a means of being successful in school and minimizes the diverse experiences and resources of her students.

The White teacher used colorblind mentality throughout her teaching journey. This appeared as she discussed case studies of students where the student’s race was not provided even though other aspects such as socioeconomic status, ability levels, and gender were specifically addressed. Leaving out a mention of race limits the thinking of people engaging with the case studies and minimizes opportunities to discuss the impact of race and make connections with intersectionality. The White teacher may not realize that “a very White characteristic is to try and put boundaries around these things, like this is whiteness and this is feminism, and I think, I mean, it all has to go together” (Discussion 3). Additionally, neglecting to realize the impact of race in situations with peers may demonstrate the Contact schema. If the White teacher engages with her Black peers differently from her White peers without realizing that race is playing a role, this could be an example of colorblind mentality. The White teacher may realize that race plays a role in these interactions and wonder about the role of race. “At the time, I was really sure that it wasn't because I was White and then I'm like, what if it's because I was white?” (Discussion 2). This realization and thinking is an indication that the White teacher may be centering the Disintegration schema.

Disintegration

With the schema of Disintegration, the White teacher recognizes race and must acknowledge that she is White and that she has certain benefits related to her race. This schema is characterized by confusion, shame, and guilt about being white. For the White teacher, the Disintegration schema may appear as pondering her role as a teacher who recognizes race. In the current study, this schema was centered in both the second (public school) and third (university) contexts with about half of the examples coming from each context.

The main finding in this schema appears as the question: What is the role of the White teacher who knows that race exists? This question conveys the thinking that the White teacher must engage in once she realizes race. Prior to the recognition of race, the White teacher may have perceived her job to be that of an instructor, sharing information that was relevant to the success of students, or as a caregiver, supporting students in being successful in school. With the realization of race and its impacts on the White teacher and her teaching, her role may need to be reconsidered, leading to many questions. How does the White teacher consider her new knowledge while continuing to work in the teaching role? Are there shifts that she may consider in her teaching, planning, assessment, behavior management? What are situations that may be leading to shame or guilt, and how can the White teacher work through those? Is there a difference between teacher and teacher activist? The White teacher begins to see how the system works but is unsure of her place and role. She is unsure about how to be and move in the teaching situation as her views and understandings shift.

The White teacher may begin to recognize situations of racism in schools, such as tracking students based on test scores. She may feel inclined to push for changes by advocating for her Black and Brown students. However, the White teacher may feel pressure to maintain the status quo at the same time. Other teachers and administrators may be uncomfortable with the attempts to make

changes, and the White teacher may still need to feel accepted by her peers and supervisors. She may struggle with the idea that,

> Somebody else is working to change that. You're like, my lane is to explain how it works and help you navigate it. And survive it. So I think it is a different position as a teacher versus maybe a teacher activist (Discussion 1)

This struggle may lead to guilt about her lack of action or shame about being the White teacher, which is indicative of the Disintegration schema.

Reintegration

The White teacher may center the Reintegration schema as one way of working through her negative feelings. The Reintegration schema involves the White teacher being consciously White and believing that White people are superior to Black and Brown people. For the White teacher, the Reintegration schema may appear as presenting herself as the authority figure, believing she knows what is best for all students and teachers and discounting ideas and input from Black and Brown teachers. The Reintegration schema was centered in the second and third contexts with the majority of the examples coming from the second time and context.

While centering the Reintegration schema, the White teacher may present herself as the authority on what is best for all students. In regards to meeting the needs of Black and Brown students, the White teacher may present her idea for supporting Black and Brown students. If her idea is not used or supported, she may feel dismissed and discount the strategies implemented by other teachers or administrators. In the following example, the White teacher expressed concern around a Black male student who was not meeting the school's behavior expectations. She recommended moving him into a higher level class but was told that was not an option.

> I brought it up as a racial problem, and they said basically that because, So, they did, they matched him. His other teachers were Black men to try and connect with him, and it was, it

> was sort of dismissed as I was the idealistic White savior woman, and I was like, but if I can give you strategies that work it shouldn't matter that I'm white, and he's Black. Like, that's the point. (Discussion 2)

As a result of her idea being refused, the White teacher shifted to center the Contact schema by indicating that race should not matter. These types of shifts are common as the White teacher makes moves to maintain her status.

Because the White teacher centering Reintegration believes that White people are superior, she may question how Black and Brown teachers interact with Black students. She may decide that their methods are not the best for the students, even though she cannot understand the experience of being Black. In the following example, one White teacher discusses her interpretation of a Black teacher's thoughts and actions towards a Black student.

> And a lot of the [Black][10] teachers of the school were very, I see it now, after, of course, reading and learning more as like, the wanting better and teaching them that the world is harsh, so, like, man up now, sort of thing. But that's not what, this [Black] kid needed. This kid needed reassurance that he's smart and opportunities to prove that (Discussion 2)

The example above also suggests that the Black and Brown teachers do not recognize that the Black student is smart, further negating their position as an authority figure.

Phase 2: Evolution of a Non-Racist Identity – Pseudo-Independence, Immersion-Emersion, Autonomy

Helms' second phase, Evolution of a Non-racist Identity, involves moving past the tendency of White people to maintain their privilege and into a space of challenging systemic racism in their

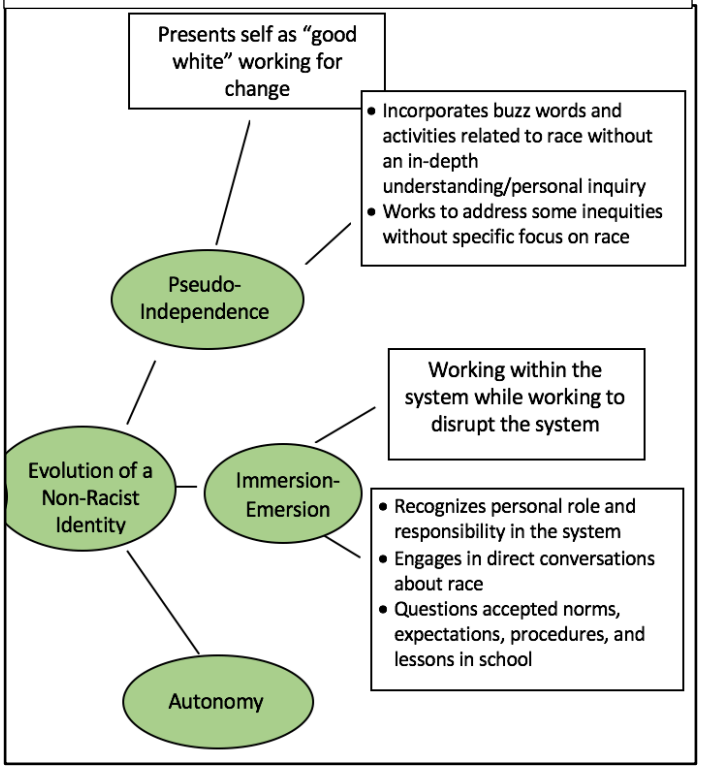
[10] It is notable that during my discussions with my critical friend, I did not explicitly state the races of the teachers and students about whom I was talking. Even in a space designed specifically to talk about topics of race.

classrooms and schools. Helms presents three schemas for this phase, Pseudo-Independence, Immersion-Emersion, and Autonomy.

Pseudo-Independence

The schema of Pseudo-Independence involves the intellectualization of racism and the need to work for equality. For the White teacher, the Pseudo-Independence schema may appear as working to address inequality without specifically focusing on race. This schema was centered in the second and third contexts with about half of the examples coming from each time and context.

Figure 23
Second Phase: Evolution of a Non-Racist Identity



When centering Pseudo-Independence, the White teacher wants to address racial inequality but does not recognize the importance of considering her role in the system. Instead, she may work to address inequality by focusing on environmental factors such as socioeconomic status or testing bias to explain differences. In the example below, the White teacher incorporated case studies as a means of helping preservice teachers think about how they would work with specific students.

> C: So there's this colorblind aspect to these case studies where, that's just what I noticed that they're, they're, they're not identified.
>
> M: That would be an interesting study to put up the same story, but with different names. And see how that, how people respond differently. So, would you put a race on these?

> C: I think so, because I think not is not allowing an opportunity for an intersectional analysis I guess of the student, and we know that intersectionality is important, because people are telling us. So like this one, obviously, I think we're trying to identify like their, Eugene's autism and like, how do you support this from a special education perspective? But the teacher's really going to have to approach it, each kid from more than just their diagnosis. And it just brings another opportunity. I think for student teachers to, to pay attention to race because if they're white, they're used to not and they're picturing White people in these case studies. Probably. And if they said, like, well, why does it matter that she's Black that's another conversation of because it matters. Cause I mean in the first one, we, you brought up class issues, you know, she stays in an extended stay, so. (Discussion 3)

In this example, the White teacher addressed specifics related to the students' identified learning struggles and, in some cases, socioeconomic status, without addressing race. This allows the White teacher to consider environmental factors without engaging directly with issues of race.

Immersion-Emersion

In the schema of Immersion-Emersion, the White teacher actively explores racism, assimilation, and White culture and makes moves towards accepting personal responsibility for racism. For the White teacher, the Immersion-Emersion schema may appear as working to disrupt the system by engaging in direct conversations about race and questioning norms and expectations in school. The Immersion-Emersion schema was centered in the second and third contexts, with the majority of the examples coming from the third time and context.

The overall message of the Immersion-Emersion schema was working within the system while working to disrupt the system. The White teacher realizes that she is a White teacher working within a White system and begins to understand how to use her position to disrupt the systems.

When centering this schema, the White teacher begins to see being White as a positive thing. She recognizes her role and responsibility in systemic racism, as evidenced in the example below.

> M: I think the big thing for me, the using this piece for elicitation is just thinking about like, how my teaching style and conversations that I had with these students that I would not have had and did not have before. I felt much more confident going into this classroom and saying like, let's talk about this issue that's going on in schools right now, or this conversation I overheard, or just really being honest about, like, this is what teaching looks like and here are things that you may not be aware that you're doing and then giving them opportunities also to learn about other cultures because I've really been thinking about how we do that with homogenous school situations. So.
>
> C: Yeah, there's a lot throughout this giving many tools to combat what we know White teachers like to do that's harmful. Like, you've recognized that talking about kids in the deficit way is something that we need to challenge and stop doing as teachers. And you give them like quotations of, of other things to say, instead, like ways to fight it. And it's direct. It's not like, value all children, you know, it's different than that kind of language. It's really more direct. (Discussion 3)

In this example, the White teacher expresses recognition that she is more confident and able to engage in honest conversations with her students. In addition, the White teacher is able to provide her students with tools so they will be prepared to disrupt the system as well.

Autonomy

The sixth schema, Autonomy, involves working for antiracism, as well as fighting against other forms of oppression. Development of a humanitarian attitude toward people of all races is also present in this schema. There were no examples of this schema in this research, which supports

Helms (2020) assertion that this schema is never fully achieved. However, this does not mean that the White teacher does not work to center this schema. The White teacher may engage in activities such as engaging in continual self-reflection (Case, 2012) and antiracist work (Utt and Tockluk, 2020), which would demonstrate this schema.

The purpose of this self-study was to understand how White teacher identity influences teaching and learning practices in multiple contexts and how racial identity changes over time. The data suggest that time and context impacted the White teacher's racial differently. Moving from a racially homogenous context to a racially diverse context resulted in a variety of shifts in regards to racial identity, while the amount of time, or years working as an educator, did not. As a result of changing contexts, the White teacher centered more schemas and centered schemas differently than she did in the previous contexts. With this finding, this study offers further support for Helms' (2020) assertion that White racial identity is not a developmental process but a fluid, shifting way of thinking and acting. These shifts were influenced by a number of factors including school culture and expectations, as well as an increased number of interactions with Black and Brown people and a greater awareness of race and race related systems. In regards to time, the analysis of data revealed researcher assumptions of increased racial awareness with advanced degrees and teaching experience. The data also showed that university professors and veteran teachers continued to center the Contact and Disintegration schemas by using coded language instead of addressing issues of race and equality directly. These results suggest that the teaching shifts are greater with changes of context than with changes in time and experience. These findings have implications for teacher education, specifically field experiences and professional learning, which are discussed in the following chapter.

5 Discussion

The current study confirms previous research relating to racial identity and the impact of context. Hagerman (2014) and Bloom, Peters, Margolin, and Fragnoli (2015) considered the impact of context by comparing students and teachers in racially homogenous and racially diverse settings. Hagerman (2014) looked at families from different communities in the same metro area. She found that awareness of racism and White privilege were impacted by the school context. Specifically, children attending a more racially diverse school recognized and discussed racism while students who attended a majority White school did not acknowledge race nor recognize systemic racism. Bloom, Peters, Margolin, and Fragnoli (2015) used open-ended questions to study pre-service teachers' impressions of fieldwork schools, diversity in the classroom, and impact of the student teaching experience. The researchers situated the pre-service teachers' responses into Helms' White racial identity framework. Bloom, Peters, Margolin, and Fragnoli found that pre-service teachers in racially homogenous settings fell into the contact schema more often than pre-service teachers in racially diverse settings. The findings of the current study reflect the findings in the two studies discussed above, as the I demonstrated a greater awareness of race in the more racially diverse context, which I had not expressed in the more homogeneous White context. This awareness appeared in my teaching in a number of ways. While I focused on students in relation to the school setting in the homogenous White setting, I intentionally worked to know my students on a personal level after moving to the more diverse setting. In addition, my artifacts from the racially diverse setting encouraged student input and ideas more frequently than the artifacts from the homogeneous setting. In these ways, the impact of context on teaching is significant and should be considered in regards to teacher preparation programs.

Teacher preparation programs involve a variety of learning opportunities including direct instruction, coursework, and field experiences, such as student teaching. According to the research

about the influence of teaching contexts, additional consideration should be given to the field experiences component, specifically the inclusion of diverse contexts (i.e. Freidus & Noguera, 2017; Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018). When partnering with schools that host student teachers, teacher preparation programs may work to include schools with racially diverse populations. This criteria is difficult to define.

The word "diversity" is typically associated with the presence of Black and Brown people (Chen, 2015). In regards to this study, diversity refers to the presence of multiple racial groups in one school. However different groups must be present to a certain degree. For example, Rabinowitz, Emamdjomeh, and Meckler (2019) state that, in a diverse school district, a single race does not constitute more than 75% of the student body. While a specific percentage may not be attainable, the amount of racial groups and the numbers of individuals in those groups may be a consideration for selecting schools to work as partners with teacher preparation programs.

Additionally, while student teachers may benefit from working in a number of different teaching contexts, spending longer times in contexts that are more diverse may allow the student teacher to engage with Black and Brown teachers, students, and administrators in deeper ways. Engaging in this way may not be possible, as the majority of teachers (82%) and principals (80%) continue to be White (King, J., McIntosh, A., & Bell-Ellwanger, J., 2016). However, White pre-service teachers need to be prepared to interact with Black and Brown teachers, students, and administrators in ways that ensure a lens of equity. The White pre-service teachers need to be aware of aspects of this work including white superiority, white fragility, tone policing, and other ways White people minimize the experiences of Black and Brown people (Saad, 2020). They need to have strategies to work through these feelings without relying on Black and Brown people for guidance or answers. Teaching programs need to be intentional in the planning and implementing pre-service teaching experiences to incorporate diverse contexts. As this study found, awareness of racial identity and

creating shifts in this racial identity cannot be assumed with advanced degrees and teaching experiences.

Additionally, this study supports previous research regarding White teachers and Helms' White racial identity framework. Studies conducted by Shulman (2016) and Delano-Oriaran and Meidl (2012) found that teachers who engaged in reading and discussion groups focused on racial identity and bias experienced shifts in their own racial identities. In both of these studies, as well as this current study, the teachers began to recognize the impact of race and their roles in the system. These realizations led to a desire to change. As with the current study, Shulman (2016) and Delano-Oriaran and Meidl (2012) found that teachers struggled with enacting their desire to take action, which is indicative of the Disintegration schema. While both of these studies focused on the centering of the Disintegration schema, the current study extends this view to consider how the White teacher centers each of the six schemas, as well as multiple schemas at one time. These findings speak directly to a concern of Helms (2020) in relation to positive white identity.

Disintegration
• Confusion • Shame • Guilt

In the absence of role models with positive white identities, the White teacher may struggle to move through the discomfort and confusion associated with being White and focus on centering the Disintegration schema. Tatum (1994) and Boyd (2020) discuss the importance of offering White students and teachers an alternative to stalling in the feelings of confusion, guilt, and shame. By considering the range of schemas and the centering of multiple schemas, the White teacher can see both her role in the systems of racism and the possibility for shifting her role. While there is not a path or guide for centering schemas that focus on disrupting racist systems, recognizing that these schemas are a component of white racial identity can help the White teacher work through negative feelings and towards taking action.

In this way, the current study corroborates the work of Arsenault (2018) who considered racial identity development of White teachers and microaggressions in the classroom. By considering the views of both teachers and students, Arsenault found that all six schemas can be seen in the actions of White teachers. She also notes that White teachers may center multiples schemas at one time. The data from the current study support Arsenault's findings, as I centered different schemas throughout my teaching career and frequently centered multiple schemas. This study offers further support for Helms' (2020) assertion that White racial identity is not a developmental process but a fluid, shifting way of thinking and acting.

Discussing White racial identity, particularly through Helms' framework, could enable the White teacher to consider her racial identity and understand the fluidity and possibilities around racial identity. Teacher preparation programs could incorporate lessons or classes related to this topic. If a program introduced Helms' White racial identity framework early in the program, pre-service teachers would be able to consider their identities and the shifts they make as they move through the program. For teachers in the field, consistent professional learning activities could incorporate consideration of White racial identity. While there is no checklist or end goal in this type of work, teaching educators about white racial identity can impact their thinking and actions related to teaching. The key would be providing opportunities and spaces for open, continual discussion, guidance, and support throughout the learning process. The school or district would need to commit time and attention to this journey because it is lifelong. Understanding racial identity and its impact on teaching could be a powerful tool for teachers entering or already in the classroom. This increased awareness could enable the White teacher to understand how her thoughts and actions impact her teaching and see possibilities for change.

The current study also extended the current body of research in a number of ways. This research extended previous research by considering the impact of different contexts, as well as length

of time as an educator. By studying the same teacher moving through different contexts, this study provided a different view of the consideration of context. In contrast to studies of teachers in their current contexts, this study considered the change in racial identity when moving into different contexts. While some previous research focused on the impacts of interventions such as discussion groups (Shulman, 2016) and book groups (Delano-Oriaran and Meidl, 2012), the current study considered a White teacher's actions outside of a prescribed activity labeled as multicultural and without direct intervention. In this way, the current study emphasized the importance of reflection and introspection as opposed to implementing a particular teaching strategy.

Using the self-study method minimized the impact of different childhood experiences that exist in studies with multiple participants. In addition, the use of stimuli and discussion with critical friends enabled me to consider my actions retrospectively. In this way, the current study allowed me to step back and look at my previous work more reflectively. Focusing on artifacts I created previously instead of on my current thoughts and actions, provided a different way to engage in inquiry related to racial identity and allowed me to remove myself, be less defensive, and be more open to criticisms of my racial awareness. Using these artifacts gave me the space to see my challenges as well as my growth, which is important given Helms' stated need for positive white racial identity. Using artifacts may provide a means for preservice teachers to think about and discuss racial identity.

Direct discussions about concepts such as racial identity are necessary for teachers. Without this knowledge, racial identity still exists and is changing. However, having an awareness of racial identity can help White teachers frame and understand their thinking and actions in relation to their white identity. In the excerpt below, I share my (lack of) awareness of racial identity. However, I was not aware of racial identity or its shifting at the time I was teaching.

> Broadening this idea of context shifted my racial identity in a way that allowed me to access and center a larger variety of schemas. At the time, I was not consciously aware that this shift was taking place and, I maintained a stance of reaching all children during this time. It was not until engaging in the third teaching setting, the university, that I actually considered my White racial identity and my roles in the systems of racism as a teacher (Researcher Journal)

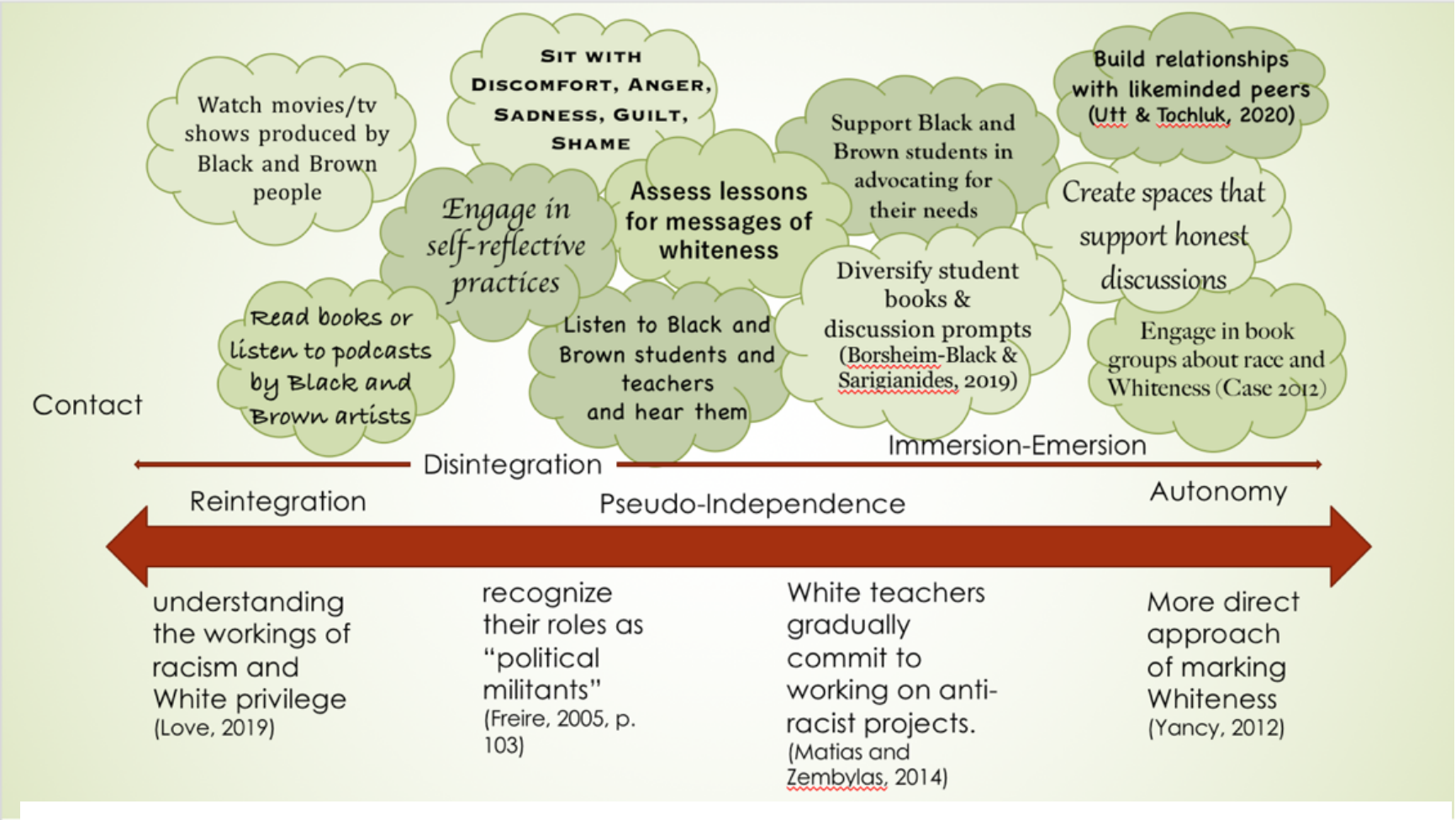
Similarly to Shulman (2016) and Delano-Oriaran and Meidl (2012), I found the language of Helms' White racial identity framework as helpful in understanding my racial identity and discussing race in the teaching context.

Direct discussions around racial identity, racist systems, and the larger idea of race in society are imperative for educating White teachers. While teacher preparation programs can incorporate diverse student teaching contexts and schools can implement professional learning for teachers, direct discussion must be an overarching component. In regards to placing White student teachers in racially diverse contexts, White teachers must be prepared to recognize their racial identity and how that impacts their actions in this setting. While White teachers may experience some shifts in regards to racial identity by entering their placements, they will also bring their White innocence, misconceptions, and lack of awareness if they do not directly engage with these aspects first. When implementing professional learning sessions for teachers, White teachers must engage in direct conversations about race and racial identity where race is named and specific actions, lessons, or teaching materials are considered. In any of these situations, the facilitators should discuss the potential for discomfort and distress to prepare White teachers and minimize the potential to disregard or ignore this work. It is too important.

Implications for Education

By working to understand and accept our roles as White teachers in the racist system, we can challenge ourselves to be better instead of deciding to "settle for less" (Yancy, 2012, p. 78). There are no checklists or specific answers to look for in this work. There is no end result because there is no end. The process is lifelong and needs to be considered regularly. Starting the process can look many ways. No matter where a White teacher is in regards to their racial identity, there are possibilities for taking action. Figure 23 below shares some ideas. These suggestions are by no means comprehensive and are not meant to serve as a list of activities to work through. They represent possibilities for investigating White racial identity based on this study.

Figure 24
Possibilities for educators to take action



Note. These examples come from existing research, as well as the current study. They are not meant to serve as a checklist but as ideas to start a journey.

In the visual above, the activities do not fall into one specifof ic schema. The activities likely center two or three schemas, as they are part of a moving and changing process. While there is no guide or checklist for this process, there are some considerations. The idea of discussions comes up regularly, as direct discussions about race, listening to Black and Brown students and teachers, and engaging with likeminded peers in discussion or book groups. Creating norms and common understandings around these discussions is critical to ensure the discussions are helpful and work for positive change. While these discussions will likely cause discomfort for the people involved, having a space and relationships that support this aspect are key.

In engaging with students or facilitating a group, there are ways to open discussion generally, which may help people relax and open up. For example, direct discussions may involve talking about news stories or articles about experiences of Black, Brown, and White people related to school dress code violations. There are numerous examples of stories where dress codes are unevenly enforced, particularly against Black and Brown students (Sherwin, 2017). Discussing situations that do not directly address students or teachers at the school allows the conversation to begin without putting people on the defensive.

Opening conversation may also involve directly stating the race of characters in case studies, word problems, and professional learning activities. For example, instead of asking if teachers believe all students can learn, ask if teachers believe White students can learn. Then ask if they believe Black students can learn. Then ask if they believe Brown students can learn. Specifically stating race may lead to people asking why race is stated directly or provide an opening for discussions about how school (and life) look similar and different for different racial groups and what teachers need to know and understand about teaching children about different skin colors.

(De)Limitations and Research Possibilities

This research involved a number of limitations and delimitations that must be addressed. For this self-study, I selected artifacts I created during my time as a teacher. I chose artifacts that seemed to relate to my research topic, represented a range of the positions I held as a teacher, and included a variety of formats. I kept my groups of artifacts manageable by removing repetitive artifacts. While I was purposeful in my artifact selection process, my choices impacted the research. Possibilities for future research may include repeating the research method using different artifacts or having another person choose the artifacts for elicitation.

In this study, I considered a version of myself from the past, but this version was created through my updated lens and experiences. As a result, I found myself projecting my current racial identity onto my previous self. Through the use of multiple data sources related to my teaching and the teaching context, I worked to create the most comprehensive image of the self I was during the creation of the artifacts. I remained aware of my thinking and processed the struggle of focusing on my past self through reflective writing and conversations with my critical friend. Future research may focus on artifacts the White teacher created more recently or those the White teacher is currently using. Keeping the entire process focused on the present may minimize this struggle.

During this research, the majority of the people supporting the process were White. I was a White female investigating my White racial identity through conversations with my White critical friend. Additionally, my dissertation committee consisted of four White females. While this presented the possibility of excluding a variety of voices, this decision was purposeful. It was important to include voices and perspectives of Black and Brown people, particularly in work related to considering race. However, it was not the work of Black and Brown people to support my work in understanding my White racial identity. To mediate this, I used the resources offered by Saad and Helms to provide insight into Black and Brown perspectives while working with White scholars

and peers who were engaged in the work of interrogating their own Whiteness. These choices provided support and differing perspectives I needed as I engaged in this work. In future research, working with a racially diverse group of people to interrogate racial identity could provide greater insights and perspectives. When including participants of different races, all participants would need to be clear in their intentions, set clear norms to ensure that everyone feels valued and respected, and work to minimize the potential re-traumatization of Black and Brown participants. Having direct discussions and clear plans about how to pause the discussion and address discomfort may be beneficial.

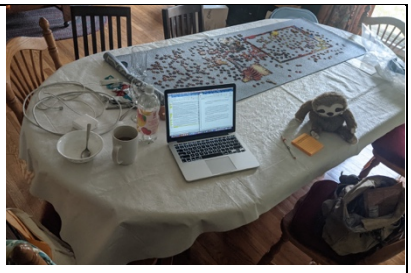
This research was bounded by a focus on my White racial identity and my work as a teacher and teacher researcher. Throughout this research process, I encountered race in my personal and social lives. While these impacted my thinking around race to some degree, these interactions were not included in this study in order to keep the research focused on the White teacher.

And Now for Something Completely Different: A Puzzling Process

When I am in need of inspiration or feeling restless or foggy, I find it helpful to wander through thrift stores. Wandering thrift stores always centers me and gives me a sense of calm. It seems to open space in my mind when it is cluttered, and the space allows my mind to process things that seem overwhelming.

At the beginning of my dissertation process, I was stressed about setting my topic and method, choosing a theory and format, so I went for a wander. I was walking through one of my usual thrift stores and came across a puzzle. While most of the puzzles in thrift stores have may or may not be complete, this puzzle was brand new. It was still sealed in its bag. However, the puzzle did not have a box, so I had no idea what the image was. The bag was pretty small, so I figured I would buy the puzzle and put it together. It was clear metaphor for my current space.

I saw the pieces as representative of the experiences, thoughts, and ideas I had around my research. I had no idea what research plan these pieces would make, but being able to ma-



nipulate and put together an actual puzzle would help me process. My gut said to buy the puzzle. It had all of its pieces and not knowing the overall image fit my situation. I am good at doing puzzles, and I thought it would just take a day or two.

I took the puzzle home and started doing it on a tray. I thought it was big enough given the size of the puzzle's bag. I dumped out all of the pieces and started sorting them by color, as I had done with many puzzles before this one. I rarely found it necessary or helpful to start with the edges, so I went with what I knew here.

It quickly became apparent that the puzzle was larger than I originally thought, and it did not appear to have a clear picture. The pieces were abstract with lots of Black and dark red. I found two eyes that did not match and something that appeared to be tiger stripes. There were also pieces that reminded me of a weather radar, with swirls of blue, red, yellow, and green. I sorted through and created some groups of pieces with similar coloration that I could assemble on the tray while I figured out how to work on my puzzle in pieces and pack it up when I needed to. My house and spaces are not conducive to having a puzzle out for long periods of time.

I bought a yoga mat because I could unroll it in many different spaces (the floor, a table, a bed) and roll it up when I needed to. I was able to dump out the whole bag. After trying to work on sections based on color, as I always had, I realized I needed a more structured strategy. I put together the outside pieces to see if they could provide some guidance. Then I

grouped some of the most colorful and detailed pieces on the mat because they would be the easiest to put together. I put the other pieces back in the bag. It was still slow going. . . I worked on it on the floor in the evenings or while the kids played. When I got stuck in my analysis, I would take some time to work through the puzzle. For many weeks, I had no idea what the image was. Then one day, I thought it looked like something related to Indigenous people, but I didn't know exactly what. I kept working. I went away for a writing retreat. I took the puzzle with me, and, even though I was working with a hard deadline, I spent the first night working on the puzzle. It seemed like what I needed to do. The puzzle started coming together. I was able to place some of the big sections into the frame.

After a couple of hours, I felt like writing. I stopped working on the puzzle and wrote. I found words to put to my process and my data. My writing was smooth and came easily. Until it didn't. Then I slept.

The next day, I was called to the puzzle again. I poured more pieces out of the bag and was able to piece them together, fit them into the puzzle. I finished the puzzle and was able to focus on my research and write and think and write some more.

The image on the puzzle is of an Indigenous woman and a wolf. The colors swirl and change. One piece is missing. The bag was sealed when I bought it, so that means I lost it somewhere along the way. I feel like all of these things mean something, but for now I will settle with knowing that this puzzle was an integral part of my process.

Final Thoughts

This work is not easy. It is messy and challenging and requires constant attention. During this study, I found myself avoiding my role in supporting systemic racism, seeking comfort and confirmation that I was a "good white," expressing strong negative feelings, and verbally committing to the work in hopes of getting praise from my critical friend. Only with the support of my critical friend, the guidance of Black and Brown scholars, and the knowledge that I can and need to do better could I engage meaningfully in this process.

> What I realize now is that my teaching definitely worked for holding up the systems that are in place to keep groups of people in their respective places. It supported the norms of social conventions that are integral in our society. Even though the system is grossly unfair and insidious, it is expected, comfortable in some ways because it is the norm. It takes a lot of energy and attention and work to make a shift. It is easier to maintain the status quo. Unfortunately, looking back, I see the ripple effects of these artifacts and my actions and all the possibilities for lifelong and wide ranging impacts. I know I am just one person in a larger sys-

tem, but I have the possibility to impact people and create ripples of change and allyship instead of reinforcing the same damaging narratives and social constructs. (Researcher Journal)

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Appendices

Appendix A

Artifacts as a Private-School Teacher Data Table

Artifact	When Created	Purpose when created	How does this fit with my research?
Life Skills Handouts: 1. Organization 2. Goal Setting 3. Stress Management 4. Surviving Middle School 5. Study Skills 6. Communicating with Adults 7. Being a Successful Student	2005 during my time teaching at a private, Christian, majority White school in a wealthy suburb of A major city in the southeast	To support students in areas that were not a part of the academic curriculum through small group (8-10 students) meetings	I created these handouts as a novice teacher, during my first 5 years as a teacher, with limited interactions with students and teachers of color, These handouts address skills that students are expected to have in the traditional school setting, which has been shown to be founded on Whiteness. These artifacts showed the impact of my Whiteness before I began investigating my own Whiteness.
Handouts for Teachers: 1. Presenting Notes to Students	2005, during my time teaching at a private, Christian, majority White school in a wealthy suburb of A major city in the southeast	For a professional development, To inform teachers about best practices for teaching students in ways that meet the needs of students with different learning styles	These handouts reflect what I advocated as best practice at this time. These may provide insight into my definition of best practice at this time, which is based on my experience as a White teacher.
Handouts for Parents: 1.PTA Presentation	2006, during my time teaching at a private, Christian, majority White school in a wealthy suburb of A	To inform parents about best practices for supporting their children in middle school, Presented at a school with a mi-	These handouts reflect what I advocated as best practice at this time. These may provide insight into my definition of best practice at this time, which is based on my experience as a White teacher.

	major city in the southeast	nority White population in an area with low SES	
School Website	2020	I taught at this school from 2002-2007.	I revisited this website as I considered my time teaching in this environment. I immediately remembered why I left this teaching environment and moved to a more diverse setting. It was also a strong reminder of why it is important to consider the impact White teachers have on White students.

Appendix B

Artifacts as Public-School Teacher Data Table

Artifact	When Created	Purpose when Created	How does this fit with my research?
Social Studies Vocab Quizzes: 1. Canada 2. Colonialism 3. Aztec, Maya, Inca 4. Revolution as Art	2010 during my time as a middle school teacher supporting students with special needs	To teach and assess knowledge on vocabulary related to various areas of the world, historical events, and political aspects	I created these vocabulary sheets and assessments with the designated school curriculum. The topics they cover lend themselves to being clearly influenced by Whiteness given the focus on international locations and events
Math Projects: 1. High Fashion 2. Playground Geometry	2013 during my time as a middle school teacher supporting students with special needs	To assess Math skills through project based, real world assessment	These assignments include activities such as creating and pricing clothing and planning a playground. These assignments lend themselves to bias from my experiences as a White woman.
Special Education Support: 1. Behavior Tracker Sample	2010 during my time as a middle school teacher supporting students with special needs	To track and monitor accommodations and goals of students who are being served through an IEP or 504, as well as general education students	I created these forms for use with my students, who were mainly Black and Brown, to help them achieve goals related to behavior and performance in schools. I was teaching in a very diverse setting for the first time in my teaching career, and I was working to help students be successful in a traditional school setting, which has been shown to be founded on Whiteness.
GMSA Handouts: 1. GMSA Mods. Handout 2. GMSA PEC Strategies 3. GMSA Parent Handout	2009 during my time as a middle school teacher supporting	For conference presentation for middle school teachers	These handouts reflect what I advocated as best practice at this time where I was working in a traditional, diverse middle school setting. These may provide insight into my definition of best practice at this time, which is

			based on my experience as a White teacher.
Parent and Student Surveys	2009 during my time as a middle school teacher supporting	To obtain information directly from parents and students about their experiences, strengths, struggles, and preferences in schooling	I created these documents to solicit information directly from my parents and students through the use of open-ended questions. My framing of the questions and the questions I ask are based on my experiences as a White teacher.
Personal Collage related to teaching	2014	I created this collage as a way of thinking though my teaching situation.	This collage represents my thoughts on teaching during my last year as a full-time teacher.
School Website	2020	I taught at this school from 2007-2015.	

Appendix C

Artifacts as a Teacher Educator Data Table

Artifact	When Created	Purpose when Created	How does this fit with research?
ECEE 3600 Documents: 1. Syllabus	2019 first class taught independently at the university	These items were created to teach preservice teachers about teaching reading, based on the previous professor's work, planned with a focus on inclusivity and diversity	These items reflect planning that involved purposeful inclusion of aspects of diversity and inclusivity in lessons and activities. This is the first time I planned with this much focus on these topics. I think the lesson plans and presentations provide the most insight into my thinking since the activities are very similar to the previous professor's work.
Inputs Documents: 1. Differentiation Presentation 2. Management Input Present 3. UDL Presentation 4. Case Studies	2017 during my doctoral program	To inform preservice teachers about various aspects of working with students with special needs in a school setting	I created these presentations as my thinking around teaching, the role of the teacher, and Whiteness were evolving. These artifacts also provide insight into what I advocated as best practice at this time in my teaching career. I wrote the case studies – stories of various students with whom I interacted during my time as a teacher in a diverse middle school – to serve as real life examples for preservice teachers to think with. I revisited these situations as my thinking around teaching, the role of the teacher, and Whiteness were evolving through my work in the doctoral program.
"How do I reach mom?" Brainstorming	2018	Brainstorming as I considered possible topics for	This document includes a breakdown of topics I felt were important for teachers, statements I created for teacher self-reflection, and

		teacher professional learning sessions	thoughts about the population I would be serving in doing PL for teachers. The document provides insight into my views of teachers and how to support them and their students in being successful as I worked through my doctoral program.
Jellyfish Notes	2017	After a discussion with a professor who talked about the in and out movement of thoughts and planning around research, I felt compelled to draw a jellyfish.	Over the course of a week, I drew this picture and added notes around it of what was on my mind, quotes from teachers I was subbing with, and questions. This drawing provides insight into my thinking around teaching during a transitional time in my teaching career. I had been working as a substitute for two years after leaving my position as a full-time teacher. Experiences from my years as a full-time teacher, as a substitute teacher, as a student were clashing in my head.
Writing Retreat Collage Quilt	2019	I created these collages over the course of a two-day writing retreat in order to consider my thinking around race and Whiteness. I created one collage on the night I arrived, a second the following morning, and a third the second evening. I joined these collages together into one large	I focused generally on Whiteness and race as I constructed these. I was trying to think through ideas around race and my positionality that would not come as words. As a result, this visual-based artifact relates directly to the focus of my current research.

		piece I am calling a collage quilt.	